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The Unity of the Church:

The Ministry: The Apostolical Succession:

THREE DISCOURSES

BY

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"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

SECOND EDITION.

VICKSBURG:

PUBLISHED BY D. TILTON BIGELOW.

1852.

The following sermons were written and preached more than a year ago in the discharge of parochial duty, and without any expectation or intention of their publication. They make no pretensions to literary merit and no such distinction is claimed for them. Composed literally "*currente calamo*," they are given to the public, just as they were preached, with the exception of two or three additional quotations in the first of the series, the notes and the appendix.

The writer has no expectation that these discourses will prove palatable to the great majority in this country "who call themselves Christians." Yet he is not without hope that their facts, statements and arguments, if duly weighed, will lead to further examination on the part of those who are concerned "to know the truth." "And if for necessary truth's sake only, any man will be offended, nay take, nay snatch at that offence which is not given, I know no defence for that. 'Tis truth and I must tell it; 'tis the Gospel, and I must preach it. And far safer it is in this case to bear anger from men than a woe from God."

Columbia, July 1, 1843.

SERMON I.

"AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH."
COLOSSIANS, i. 18.

ST. PAUL, the apostle, in his epistle to the Colossians after the salutations with which he commonly begins his letters, proceeds to speak of the great power and dignity of the Redeemer. He enlarges on this topic for the purpose, probably, of strengthening the confidence and hope of the christians at Colosse in the Lord Jesus Christ, and of encouraging them to "fight the good fight of faith." By declaring in the most ample terms Christ's exalted power and dignity, he would raise them above the fear of trial and persecution in this life, to which they were constantly exposed, and would inspire them with a trust in the Saviour, that would disarm even death of his terrors. For, whom could they reasonably dread, when so much power was engaged in their behalf and for their protection? "For by him," says the apostle, "were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; And he is before all things, and by him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things, he might have the pre-eminence."*

Under the guidance and safe-guard of such a friend, the saints at Colosse, might well rise superior to all the discouragements and difficulties which encompassed them in their journey through this weary world, and look forward with composure to the approach of that inevitable hour, when they must sink into the grave under the stroke of death.

We would do well, brethren, to remember that the same mercy embraces us, that the same power is engaged for our protection, that the same gracious Redeemer is our unfailing friend, and

* Col. i. 16–18

that in reliance upon him we are authorized to cherish the same blessed hopes for time and for eternity.

The first thing that strikes us, as worthy of observation in the text, is the singular terms in which the apostle speaks of *the Church.* It is called a *body*—a body of which *Christ* is the *head.*

The *head* is the seat of all those mental perceptions which enable us to exercise our judgment, and by which the actions of the body are controlled and directed. So the Lord Jesus Christ being head of the church is the source of all wisdom, power and dignity in it. The meaning of the Apostle's metaphor, we conceive, to be fully cleared by this brief and simple explanation. Perhaps many points of resemblance might be sought out, yet they would probably be of a fanciful character and tend little to edification.

Unity of the Primitive Church.

As the church is here and elsewhere in Scripture expressly called a *body,** we are at once and necessarily reminded of the *unity* which should distinguish it in *faith* and *practice.* As the members of the natural body are united together and to the head, by the veins, arteries, and nerves, so the members of the church are united with one another and to Christ the head, by the spirit, faith, love, sacraments, word and ministry. "There is one faith, and one baptism," saith the apostle, in the very same connexion, in which he declares that, "there is one body."†

It must be clear even to slight reflection, that in the first promulgation of the gospel and in the gathering together of the church, believers were perfectly united in the profession of the same faith and in submission to the same ordinances. The circumstances by which the first converts to christianity were surrounded, measurably compelled them to union: and that they were so united is manifestly set forth in the declaration that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers."‡ It was the prayer of our blessed Saviour, and among the last which he, as man, addressed to the Father concerning his disciples, that "they all might be one."§ And it adds to the affecting interest of this prayer, to consider, that the divine Redeemer seems to

* 1 Cor. x. 17. Eph. i. 23: iv. 16.
† Eph. iv. 4, 5.
‡ Acts ii. 42
§ St. John xvii. 20, 21.

regard the unity of his church, as a necessary evidence to the world that the Father had sent him. "Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*"*

"That they all may be one"—one in love—one in faith—one in practice—one in hope. This *oneness* of the christian church continued with but little interruption, until the perilous and purifying times of persecution ceased and believers began to exercise themselves about questions, which in their discussion, instead of ministering grace to those who heard, tended rather to strifes and divisions, and the evil works which usually attend upon contentions.

Present divisions.

Divisions of the christian name have at length so multiplied that, in our day, it seems that the question is rarely made, whether such things are allowable under the law of Christ. It appears to be taken for granted, that men will differ in their religious views—that differences are inevitable from the very constitution of men—that they will have their preferences, and that these preferences, no matter upon what grounds they may be entertained, may be safely indulged to the extent of attaching oneself to any society whatever that professes to be christian. In short, there seems to be a very widely diffused persuasion in the public mind, that one denomination of professed christianity is, as to authority, about as good as another. Hence we hear of many different associations styled churches—the deluded followers of Joe Smith, the Mormon prophet, and others equally ignorant and fanatical—appropriating to themselves this venerable and once venerated appellation. Hence it has come to pass that the exercise of a salutary discipline has almost ceased among the professed followers of Christ, it being found impossible to prevent the reception, to what are called church privileges, of those repelled, rejected or expelled by some association calling itself christian, and hence the chief aim of the various sects of the age, seems to be, to gain influence and power, by adding to their numerical strength, rather than to promote true piety and godliness among men.

Discipline impracticable.

Can any serious and reflecting person, however, really think

* St. John xvii. 20, 21.

that the various bodies of men, who are known under the name of churches of Christ, are verily authorized to act in his name, and impart to others authority to administer the sacraments of his religion? Especially can they so think, when they perceive the practical results to which such opinions lead in the countless divisions into which the professed followers of Christ are now scattered? in the bitterness and rancour which opposing sects exhibit towards each other?

Party-spirit must be restrained.

Without the introduction of some restraining principle to counteract this general disposition among men of the present day to separate into parties, it must be too evident to need proof, that every thing like unity among christians will be at an end. The only bond to draw men together in ecclesiastical associations will then be inclination and interest or accidental circumstances growing out of the intercourse of social life. And when these cease to operate or to have influence, new divisions must ensue from a change of circumstances or of relations in an ever varying and changing world, until every distinctive feature of the christian system and of the church, one after another, shall pass away and the whole be divested of that divine authority which alone can and ought to give it sanction and weight with men. Indeed if these separations into distinct bodies or communities be allowable, there seems to be no good reason why every man should not act for himself and family in the affairs of religion, without the intervention or aid of any ministry whatever. And certainly those who at this day have discarded all authority in the church, act consistently in administering the rites of religion at all times, in all places, and to all persons who ask for them, without reference to any rule, law or custom upon the subject. They act consistently, we say, with their avowed principles. Whether these principles be in accordance with the revealed will of God, as interpreted by the practice of the primitive church, is another and very different matter.

The "old paths" forsaken.

An idea seems to prevail quite extensively that christianity in its doctrines and forms is susceptible of improvement like the arts and sciences, and that new discoveries are to reward investigation into it, as in other things. Hence old fashioned views of religion—such as teaching children the catechism, and training them to the habit-

ual practice of devotion and other christian duties, are not only rejected but actually ridiculed as savouring of earthliness, and the self-constituted reformers of the age set forth their own peculiar sentiments with all the positive confidence and directness of assertion which attach to the claim of infallibility. There is truth in the maxim which says that extremes meet, and those who first set out with a denial of all authority are presently found claiming all authority for themselves.

Campbellites have failed to dispense with a Creed.

This is strikingly shown in the movements of a modern sect called by themselves *Reformers*, but better known among us under the appellation of *Campbellites*. And here I beg to be understood not as mentioning names reproachfully, but simply for the sake of illustration. Among those, as well as among others to whom I shall have occasion to refer in this discourse, I am free to declare, and I take pleasure in saying, that I believe there are many humble, pious and sincere believers, "who through faith and patience are striving to inherit the promises."*

One of the characteristics of the sect, already named, is the rejection of all creeds and the avowed adoption of the New Testament in their place, as the only and all-sufficient standard of faith and practice. If, say they, Creeds are contrary to the New Testament, they are wrong and ought to be rejected. If they are in accordance with it, they are at least unnecessary and may be injurious. There is plausibility in this reasoning—full as much as that which decided the fate of the famous library of Alexandria,—but far more sophistry concealed under an exterior of much candor and fairness. The word *creed*, means what? undoubtedly, *belief*. And it matters not in principle whether it consist of one article or twenty. Now when we come to ask these people who have undertaken to reform christianity, or rather the church, what they *believe* to be meant by christian baptism, they unhesitatingly declare, that it is *immersion* in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost:†

* Heb. vi. 12.

† The form of words in baptizing is not the same with all the *preachers* or *proclaimers* among these people. Some use the common form, "I baptize thee, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Others of them say "By the authority of the Messiah I baptize thee for the remission of sins"—and some here add, "In the name of the Father, &c." Others again "I baptize thee into the name of Jesus for the remission of sins."

and that no affusion, pouring or sprinkling of water, can be properly regarded as baptism. Consequently all persons who have been baptized in any other way than by immersion, they consider as yet without the pale of the church and strangers to the covenants of promise. And their practice accords herewith; for no person can or will be received into what they are pleased to style the kingdom of Heaven or of Christ, without submitting to be immersed.

Thus we see then, that while they profess to reject all creeds, they nevertheless strenuously maintain—and right they are for doing this—that interpretation of the language of scripture which *they believe* to be the truth of God: and, consequently do, in practice, uphold the very thing which they condemn in others. For a creed was never intended to express any thing more than what was conceived to be the meaning of holy scripture. It is the purpose of the creed to express in as brief a form as possible the leading facts and main doctrines of the christian religion, and so far from having the effect, as is alledged, of separating men into parties, just the contrary object is aimed at, and just the opposite result, for the most part, obtained by their use. No man, who believes in the divine authority of the New Testament, will object to a single article of what is called the Apostles' Creed. Much of it is in the very language of scripture,* and that which is not, is nevertheless so plainly deducible from it, that no intelligent person will deny that it is built upon the express authority of God's holy word. No really sound objection therefore can be urged against its use. On the other hand, the many valuable purposes which it serves by presenting a concise summary of the Christian faith, and forming a bond of union among the followers of Christ, will always vindicate the wisdom of retaining it among our forms of public worship. The precise period of time at which this creed, venerable for its antiquity, was composed, is not known with certainty. No doubt it was very near to the apostles' times, though we cannot assert that it belongs to the very age in which they lived and preached. It is as near a transcript of what they taught, very briefly expressed, as can well be conceived. Indeed some learned men have given it as their

Apostles' Creed.

* See 1 Cor. xv

opinion that this creed was formed as an abstract from the apostolic writings, and intended as far as possible to supply the want of the sacred books among people who had not the opportunity to read them, as likewise to furnish an outline, to ignorant people, incapable of reading, of what things they were required to believe in order to their becoming christians. Purposes which the creed is admirably adapted to answer, as any one may be easily convinced of, who undertakes to teach the unlearned the main doctrines of revelation and their own corresponding duties.

But one of the chief and among the most excellent purposes which the creed answers, especially by its introduction into the worship of the congregation is the preservation of unity, among the members of the body. It is thus that we are all enabled to "speak the same thing," and "be perfectly joined together," as the apostle enjoins, "in the same mind and the same judgment."* It is thus we confess Christ "before men," profess "the faith once delivered to the saints,"† and preclude all just occasion for divisions.

It is thus too, that liberty of conscience is secured. Not that sort of liberty, which amounts to *free thinking*, which spurns all restrictions and limitations upon the reason and judgment, which puts at defiance all law and authority, and sets up its own dictum as the infallible truth of God. This is licentiousness and not liberty. This is that wild spirit of insubordination, which under the name of *freedom* has never failed to exercise an iron despotism over the minds of men, wherever and whenever an opportunity was presented. Of this, the past history of the world has furnished abundant and striking examples, and it is in truth the real foundation of nearly all the systems which Sectarianism has introduced, defended and established.

The Apostles' and Nicene creeds contain an outline of the main facts and doctrines of the Gospel. They deal with general principles;‡ they set forth not a single peculiarity, except as it may distinguish christianity from all other religions; nor do they enunciate a single fact, or declare a single doctrine in which the vast majority, if not all christians, do not agree. And here is a leading point of difference between the Protestant Episcopal

* 1 Cor. i. 10. † St. Jude, 3.

‡ These as applied in practice are extended and explained in the worship, offices, &c. of the church.

Church and the various dissenting bodies around her. She requires the reception only of that which was confessedly acknowledged in the primitive church as the christian faith—as of universal belief and no less universal practice. The Nicene creed was put forth as embodying the sense and judgment of the church of Christ, as early as the year 325 (A. D.) and in condemnation of the Arian heresy which then began to disturb the unity of the body. Whatever can be shown to be of undoubted belief and practice, among the whole body of believers previous to that time, we hold to be obligatory upon us at this day, as members of the Catholic Church of Christ. We call on no man to subscribe to any thing peculiar and distinct from what was thus believed and practised, in order to his becoming a christian. The demand made is, "dost thou believe all the articles of the christian faith as contained in the apostle's creed?"* and upon the affirmative profession thus made, we baptize in the name of the blessed and adorable Trinity, and receive the subject into the visible church, as a member of Christ's body. Not so with the self-styled Reformers of this age, who insist upon immersion as indispensable to admission into the visible fold of Christ. Not so with Presbyterians, who set forth in their "Confession of Faith," that "angels and men, predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed—that the righteous are chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of God's mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace"—and that it hath pleased God, "for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by the rest of mankind, and ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins to the praise of his glorious justice"†—Not so with Methodists, who substitute internal persuasions, which they call the assurance of faith, or the witness of God's spirit, for that holiness of life, that inward purity and moral rectitude, which are the proper *evidence* of conversion—of renovation—of an acceptable state with God. Not so with Papists, who demand unqualified submission to the decrees of

Difference between the Episcopal Church and others.

* Prayer Book. Office of Baptism.

† Confession of Faith; article or ch. iii. of God's eternal decrees—Phila. Ed. 1821.

the council of Trent in the 16th century, as an indispensable condition of salvation. Thus *the theological opinions of men* are attempted to be bound on the consciences of mankind as dogmas of faith, and the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, virtually destroyed.

Contrary to all these and many others too numerous to be named, the Holy Catholic Church of Christ teaches as articles of faith those things only which are plainly delivered in the written word of Christ and his apostles, and about the truth of which there never was any doubt among the faithful. And now let me ask, is not this reasonable? is not this safe? is it not consistent with the charity of the gospel? If my fellow man professes his conviction of the truth of what the apostles taught, why must I impose on him new and additional terms of communion or fellowship which they never required? Why must my interpretation of scripture be taken as correct and his condemned? or why his received, and mine rejected? Who is to decide between us, if we chance to disagree? a thing very likely to happen. We both appeal to the written word, who is to be umpire between us? There is no decision to be had in such a case, without an appeal to the authority of the church; without reverting to primitive christianity, and that which has received the sanction of all, every where and from the beginning to the council of Nice, A. D. 325—(down to which period it is acknowledged on all hands, the faith was kept pure and unadulterated by the great body of believers in every part of the world—) and this must be regarded as of apostolical authority. Further than this we need not go, to be assured of our fellowship with the apostles, and through the sacraments of the Church which they established, of our union to Christ, the living head.

The attitude of the Church towards others.

I have thought it the more necessary to dwell on this part of the subject, because of the misapprehension and prejudice, not to say, misrepresentation, which I know to abound in the community, respecting the church, and the position which she occupies towards the various religious professions around us. The church utters no denuciations against others, who through faith and repentance, are striving, however misguidedly in some things, after the crown of life. She takes her stand on general principles, which may be known and read of all men and in the setting forth of these,

the plainness and simplicity of her language are equalled only by its modesty—by the carefulness with which she has guarded her formularies from the expression of a harsh and uncharitable judgment on the faith and practice of others.

Are we asked what is the church? The xix article replies: "The visible Church of Christ, is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

Is the demand made, who are authorized to minister the word and sacraments of Christ's religion? The preface to the ordinal furnishes the answer—thus: "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time, there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons: which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried and examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, was approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority. And therefore to the intent that these orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto, according to the form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination." It will be perceived from the foregoing that the Church undertakes to declare who shall be accounted lawful ministers in her own communion. She raises not the question, nor does she say one word about the authority of those who execute the functions of religion among others. She judges them not; to their own master they stand or fall and to him they must give account. If others think their authority called in question by the declaration which she sets forth that "it is evident to all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons," she is not to blame for it. It

is their own fault that they have not sought for that authority from the source and in the way which she declares to be lawful. It is her business to see that the application of the general principle which she asserts, be made to those who seek to minister in her congregations. And this is all that she undertakes to do, leaving others to pursue the course which they believe to be warranted by the word of God and the practice of the Church of Christ. It is however not a little remarkable that the correctness of the general principle stated by the church, is admitted by the large majority of those who have left her pale and set up separate communions for themselves.

The general principle of the Church admitted by complainants.

Thus Calvin, the founder of Presbyterianism says, "If they will give us such an hierarchy, in which the Bishops have such a pre-eminence as that they do not refuse to be subject unto Christ, I will confess that *they are worthy of all anathemas*, if any such there be, *who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience.*"*

Thus Martin Luther: "I allow that each state ought to have one Bishop of its own by divine right; which I show from Paul, saying 'for this cause left I thee in Crete.'"†

Thus Melancthon: "I would to God it lay in me to restore the government of Bishops. For I see what manner of church we shall have, the ecclesiastical polity being dissolved. I do see that hereafter will grow up in the church a greater tyranny than there ever was before."‡

Thus Beza, the successor of Calvin: "In my writings touching church government, I ever impugned the Romish hierarchy but never intended to touch or impugn the ecclesiastical polity of the Church of England."§

Plea of necessity.

The plea urged for establishing a government of Presbyters contrary to what was the known order of the church was necessity. The reformation on the continent was carried forward by the lower orders of the clergy; that is by the Presbyters and Deacons, in conjunction with the people. The Bishops refused to unite with them except in a very few instances. In England on

* Word for the church p. 51, Joannes Calvini Trac. Theo. omnes p. 69.
† Ibid. Resolutions. ‡ Ibid. Apology, &c. p. 395.
§ Ibid. p. 52, Letter to Archp. Whitgift

the contrary, the ministry, including Bishops, Priests and Deacons, reformed with the people; and hence there existed no necessity and no reason to change the order of government by Bishops, and consequently no alteration was then, or for a long time after, attempted.

But what does this plea of necessity unavoidably suppose? Unquestionably, a departure from some established rule and order, otherwise there could be no reason or sense at all, in such plea. It must be evident then beyond cavil, that when the necessity ceases, the practice which the plea of necessity is introduced to justify, ought to cease also. And it is on this ground precisely that we urge all those who practise Presbyterian ordination,* to cease an irregularity, (to use the softest term,) which the state of the Christian world no longer renders necessary, if it ever did, and return to the application of the rule which, beyond all doubt, prevailed in the primitive and apostolic church.

The Church independent of Rome.

But to justify this separation and uphold the Presbyterial form of Church government, it is sometimes asserted that the orders of the Episcopal Church are defective or vitiated because derived through a corrupt channel—that is, the Romish Church. If this objection avails any thing, it is as destructive of the validity of Presbyterian orders, as it is of Episcopal ordination. For from whom did the Presbyters that founded the Presbyterian form of church government in the 16th century, derive their authority? Undoubtedly from the Church of Rome, and whatever authority they claimed and exercised, without question flowed through that channel. And can it be that this same fountain sent forth waters both sweet and bitter at the same time—that more mysterious than Elisha's salt at Jericho, Presbyterian orders came forth from it pure and unadulterated, while Episcopacy was tainted and corrupted? You perceive then that the objection, if of any weight, is fatal to those who make it. But it is alledged that the Episcopacy of the English Church, and of course that of the American branch, comes through the Roman pontiffs or popes—and the Pope being the man of sin,

* The Methodists of course included, for they have nothing but presbyterial ordination to plead, if they can make good their claim even to that. Neither Wesley nor Coke was a Bishop.

he can of course transmit no power or authority in the Church of Christ. We see not that this shifting of ground, helps along with the difficulty. For it is not to be conceived how, if the connexion which Bishops maintained with the Roman Pope vitiated or abrogated their authority, the power of Presbyters was not annulled, because of the same connexion.

That the popes of Rome, aided by the secular power, did usurp and exercise an ecclesiastical domination in Great Britain, we are not so ignorant of history as to deny. That that domination vitiated or destroyed the orders of the English Church we do most emphatically deny; and to sustain that denial we appeal both to facts and argument. Much of the misapprehension and consequent misrepresentation which abound upon this subject, are referable to the ignorance which prevails respecting the original establishment of Christianity in the British Islands, and the subsequent introduction of Romanism. We deem the subject of importance and interest enough, to merit particular attention; and although our observations must at present be restricted to the limits usually appropriated to a single discourse, yet will they be, we trust, amply sufficient to lead to a correct understanding of the question before us.

Augustin not the founder of the British Ch.

It is matter of history, well authenticated, that Augustin the monk came to Britain from Gregory of Rome, on a mission to the Anglo Saxons in the year 590. It is equally well known that some time after his arrival he met in conference seven Bishops already established in their sees in Britain and exercising Episcopal authority over the churches under their care. The question at once arises, by whom was christianity planted in Britain, and whence did these Bishops derive consecration? The answer to these questions will show what connexion the ancient British Church had with the Roman see.

And first we have witnesses as to the fact that christianity existed in Britain long before the arrival of Augustin.

* Tertullian (A. D. 193—220,) says, "some countries of the

* Adversus Judœos c. 7. "Hispaniarum omnes termini, et Galliarum diversæ nationes, *et Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita.*"

Orat. Tom 1. p. 575. "Και γαρ αι Βρετανικαι νησοι αι της Θαλαττης εκτος κειμεναι, και εν αυτω ουσαι τω Ωκεανω της δυναμεως του ρωματος ησθοντο." &c.

Britons which proved inaccessible to the Romans are subject to Christ."

Origen (A. D. 230) says, "When did Britain before the coming of Christ unite in the worship of one God."

Chrysostom (A. D. 400) "The British Islands, situated beyond our sea, and lying in the very ocean have felt the power of the word, for even there churches are built and altars erected."

You will remember that Augustin came to England A. D. 590. These testimonies show conclusively that christianity was preached and churches erected there long before he was born.

2. We have a witness as to the *time*, when christianity was introduced into Britain. Gildas a Britain by birth A. D. 546, says it was in the year of our Lord 61—viz: in and about the date of St. Paul's travels to the west. Gildas after mentioning the defeat of Boadicea, A. D. 61, adds, "*in the meanwhile the sun of the Gospel first enlightened this island.*"

3. We have a witness as to the *persons* by whom the gospel was there preached. Eusebius (A. D. 270—340) speaking of the travels of the Apostles to propagate the faith, says some of them, "passed over the ocean to the British isles"—"*επι τας καλουμενας Βρεταvικας νησους.*"—Dem: Ev. L. 3, c. 7.

4. We have witnesses as to the *specific man.* Clemens Romanus (A. D. 70) the intimate friend and fellow laborer of St. Paul, says of him, that in preaching the gospel he went to the *utmost bounds of the West*, "*επι το τερμα της δυσεως,*" an expression denoting Spain, Gaul and Britain, but more particularly the last named region.

Jerome (A. D. 329—420) speaking of St. Paul's imprisonment and subsequent journey into Spain, says, he went from ocean to ocean and preached the gospel in the *Western parts.* That in the *Western parts* he included Britain is evident from his letter to Marcella. Theodoret (A. D. 423—460) mentions the Britons among the nations converted by the apostles, and says that St. Paul, after his release from imprisonment went to Spain, and from thence carried the light of the gospel to other nations and brought salvation to *the Islands that lie in the ocean.* All writers whom I have consulted understand by this

expression, as used by the Fathers, the British Isles.* Theodoret calls the British christians "disciples of the Tentmaker" (St. Paul.) These authorities are decisive as to the establishment of christianity in Britain before the coming of Augustin in A. D. 590. The conclusion is irresistible from the testimony that the church was there planted by the Apostles, and most probably by St. Paul. "The Bishop whom St. Paul is recorded to have appointed, was Aristobulus, who is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans. By the appointment of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, the *form of church government was complete*, and the British church, therefore, in a spiritual sense, was fully established. And what results from this establishment of the British church by St. Paul? This very interesting consequence, that the church of Britain was fully established before the church of Rome. For Linus, the first Bishop of Bome, was appointed by the joint authority of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the year of their martyrdom, and therefore after St. Paul's return from Britain." †

British Ch'ch older than that of Rome.

"The British church" continues the same writer, was never theirs (the Romanists) but by usurpation. For though our Saxon ancestors were converted to christianity by Popish missionaries, yet at that very period, the British church maintaining herself in the unconquered parts of the island, had subsisted from the days of her first founder, St. Paul, and distinguished herself not only by her opposition to the heresy of Pelagius, but to the corruptions of Popery." ‡ She had every thing necessary or essential to the being and perfection of a church —doctrine, discipline and worship—dioceses, bishops, clergy,

The old British Ch'ch pure in order, doctrine and discipline.

* It will be perceived that the foregoing quotations are very brief, and in some instances the substance of the witness' testimony given without his precise words —which would have, if so furnished, to be arrayed in the dress of the ancient Greek or Latin. For the satisfaction of those who desire to settle the question of St. Paul's preaching the gospel in Great Britain, I would refer for full information to the Letters of Bishop Burgess of St. David's to his clergy, published in the 2d vol. of "the Churchman Armed against the errors of the Time." The point is there settled, it seems to me, beyond controversy.

† Bishop Burgess.

‡ The following passage from a letter of Bishop Davies to Archbishop Parker, contains a very interesting record of the sentiments of the British church. "One notable story was in the chronicle; howe, after the Saxons conquered, contynew-

sacraments, rites, customs, church edifices and schools for the instruction of her children. Nor let it be supposed that there existed, in what may be called a rude and barbarous age, the mere "form of godliness" in these arrangements, without the manifestation of its power in the principles and practice of the members of the British Church. The following extract from a treatise still extant, of Fastidius, bishop of London, more than a hundred years before the arrival of Augustin, will show that the clergy of Britain not only understood the genuine principles of the gospel, but that they also knew how to inculcate them, in practice.

"It is the will of God, that his people should be holy, and apart from all stain of unrighteousness: so righteous, so merciful, so pure, so unspotted by the world, so single-hearted, that the heathen should find no fault in them, but say with wonder, blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance. We read in the Evangelist that one came to our Saviour, and asked him what he should do to gain eternal life. The answer he received was, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Our Lord did not say, keep faith only. For if faith is all that is required, it is overmuch to say that the commandments must be kept. But far be it from me that I should suppose my Lord to have taught any thing overmuch. Let this be said only by those whose sins have numbered them with the children of perdition.

"Let no man then deceive or mislead his brother: except a man is righteous, he hath not life; except he keep the commandments of Christ, he hath no part with him. A christian is one who shows mercy to all; who is provoked by no wrong; who suffers not the poor in this world to be oppressed; who relieves the wretched, succours the needy; who mourns with mourners, and feels the pain of another as his own; who is

all warre remayned bytwixt the Brittayns (then inhabitauntes of the realme) and the Saxons, the Brittayns beyng christians, and the Saxons pagan. As occasion served, they sometymes treated of peace, and then mette together, and communed together, and dyd eate and drynk together, but after that by the meanes of Austen the Saxons became christians in such sort, as Austen had taught them, the Brittayns wold not after that nether eate nor drynk wyth them, nor yet salute them, bycause they corrupted wyth superstition, ymages and ydolatrie, the true religion of Christ." Churchman Armed, &c. p. 350.

moved to tears by the sight of another's tears; whose house is open to all; whose table is spread for all the poor; whose good deeds all men know; whose wrongful dealing no man feels; who serves God day and night and ever meditates upon his precepts; who is made poor to the world, that he may be rich towards God; who is content to be inglorious among men, that he may appear glorious before God and his angels; who has no deceit in his heart; whose soul is simple and undefiled and his conscience faithful and pure; whose whole mind rests on God; whose whole hope is fixed on Christ, desiring heavenly things rather than earthly, and leaving human things to lay hold on things divine."*

If the foregoing be a fair specimen of the teaching of the ancient British church, we may well conclude that the foundation of their ecclesiastical establishment was laid by a wise master builder—that "in doctrine they were incorrupt and held the mystery of faith in a pure conscience." It was while the christians of Britain were "living in all godly quietness," and animated doubtless by the constraining love of Christ, were pushing their missions into the northern parts of the island for the conversion of the Picts and Scots, and into Ireland, that that terrible invasion of the Saxons took place, which resulted in the conquest of the country, and well nigh the ruin of the British Church. The Britons abandoned by the Romans, presented but a feeble resistance to the veteran and disciplined battalions of the Saxons led on by daring spirits and animated by the hope of plunder. All the Eastern, Southern and midland districts were in a short time over-run and in possession of the invaders, and the unhappy Britons driven from their homes were forced to seek refuge in France or in the mountainous and inaccessible parts of Wales and Cornwall. Here history represents them as sternly maintaining for a long time their independence, and what is equally honourable to their character, as faithfully adhering to the principles and practice of the faith which they had received from the founders of their church. It was in this condition about the year 590, that Augustin found them. He had come on a mission from Gregory, Bishop of Rome, to attempt the conversion of the Saxons,

* Churton's Early English Church p. 29, 30.

and well indeed had it been if he had confined his views and efforts to this single object, instead of attempting as he did subsequently, to establish a spiritual supremacy alike unknown and repugnant to the practice and feelings of the British christians. Augustin and his company came first to the court of king Ethelbert at Canterbury, whose queen, Bertha, was a christian, who had brought with her from France a Bishop by name Liudhard or Lithardus, as her instructor in the faith of the Gospel. He had for many years previous to the arrival of Augustin, preached and administered the rites of our holy religion in the church of St. Martin's near to Canterbury, a venerable pile which yet survives, sacred alike for its antiquity and for its associations with the early establishment of christianity in Britain. To the piety and hospitality of Liudhard, Augustin was indebted for his first night's entertainment at Canterbury. Within a little more than a year after this time, Augustin received consecration at the hands of Vigil, Archbishop of Arles, and Etherius, bishop of Lyons in France, and returning to Canterbury, was invested with the pall* from Gregory of Rome, as an Archbishop. Here was the beginning of that assumption of authority which the successors of Gregory, the Popes of Rome, have since claimed to exercise over the British church. It has never been pretended even, that Augustin received his spiritual authority as a Bishop, by consecration at the hands of Gregory. All history testifies that he was consecrated by the Archbishop of Arles, a see at that time independent of Rome, and consequently the line of succession among the English bishops if traced through the Archbishop of Canterbury conducts not to Rome, but to Arles, and thence to Lyons—thence to Smyrna, where Polycarp presided as Bishop and from him to St. John at Ephesus.†

Augustin's reception by the old British Church.

* The pall (pallium) was sent by the Bishops of Rome to the Metropolitans and other chief Bishops of the West, at or after their consecration, in token of their recognition of them, as lawfully invested with their office. Though it was for several ages only a sign of fraternal regard, and a pledge of intercommunion; it came at length, (when the *honorary Primacy* of the Bishop of Rome had gradually been changed into a *Supremacy of power*,) to be regarded as a necessary preliminary to the exercise of jurisdiction by a newly consecrated Bishop.

† The Churches in Asia, (of which Ephesus and Smyrna, the sees of St. John and St. Polycarp, were the chief,) sent a mission to Gaul, about the middle of the

Our prayer Book older than the Roman.

Even the public forms of religion, as then introduced and established, were not taken from the Mass-book, as the Romanists boast, and dissenters ignorantly believe, but in the portions yet retained in the book of Common prayer, were older than the beginning of the corrupt doctrine of the mass. Gregory, so far from requiring Augustin to observe the service used at Rome, expressly charges him to search diligently for what might be more edifying in other churches, referring him especially to the old church of Gaul which was closely united in faith and practice with the old British or Welsh church. "We are not to love customs," said he, "on account of the places from which they come; but let us love all places where good customs are observed, choose therefore from every church whatever is pious, religious and well-ordered; and when you have made a bundle of good rules, leave them for your best legacy to the English." Neither did Gregory claim to exercise the powers which have been so arrogantly and without right or reason contended for as the prerogative of his successors. For in opposition to the pretensions of the Bishop of Constantinople, he asserted that, "whosoever claims the universal Episcopate, is the fore-runner of Anti-Christ." Ah! he little imagined that he was then uttering a sentiment, which in after ages would apply with marvellous directness to his successors. For the popes of Rome to this day claim the universal Episcopate, and so fall under the heavy condemnation and withering rebuke of their illustrious predecessor.

The Pope's supremacy not at first acknowledged.

Augustin had not long exercised his Episcopal authority in England, before he proposed and through Ethelbert succeeded in bringing the British Bishops to a conference. In this interview the Archbishop of Cambria (Wales,) seven bishops and a considerable number of other British clergy were present. Augustin proposed to them to acknowledge the authority of the

second century, under Photinus, who became Bishop of Lyons, and was succeeded by St. Irenæus. This mission established, if it did not found the Church in Gaul; and perpetuated in that country, not only the Apostolic succession in the time of St. John, but also the Asiatic Liturgy and usages; until the intimate connexion between Rome and Gaul, which was cemented by the Carlovingian dynasty in the 8th and 9th centuries, enabled the Popes to substitute gradually the Roman Liturgy and customs for the Gallican.

Bishop of Rome over their branch of the Catholic Church,—to conform to the Romish custom of keeping Easter*—to use the Romish forms and ceremonies in celebrating the rite of baptism and to join the Roman missionaries in preaching the gospel to the Saxons. To these demands they returned a firm and decided negative, positively refusing to acknowledge Augustin as their Archbishop. The answer of Dunod the abbot of Bangor, clearly vindicates the independence of the British church, and shows that the idea of Roman supremacy was not tolerated for a moment. "We are bound," said he, "to serve the church of God, and the bishop of Rome, and every godly christian, as far as keeping them in offices of love and charity: this service we are ready to pay; but more than this I do not know to be due to him or any other. We have a primate of our own, who is to oversee us under God, and to keep us in the way of Spiritual life." This answer given in the genuine spirit of catholic independence, fully confirms the truth of Sir Wm. Blackstone's remark, that, "the ancient British church by whomsoever founded was a stranger to the Bishop of Rome and his pretended authority." "Britain knew not that the message from Rome was the fore-runner of *forcing* away that independence, of which the bare asking would not gain the surrender: and though from this time onward to the 16th century, the Holy Catholic church of Britain, fought inch by inch, for that liberty wherewith Christ had made her free, what could she do? The student of these times knows full well the feeble condition of the Britons invaded by the pagan Saxons." The slaughter of twelve hundred Ecclesiastics at one time on the borders of Wales by Ethilfrid, king of Northumberland, not without suspicion that Augustin himself was privy to the relentless massacre, furnishes melancholy evidence

* "The British Church at this time kept their Easter-day on a Sunday, from the 14th to the 20th day of the paschal moon inclusive; whereas the Roman church kept it on the Sunday which fell between the 15th and 21st. The rule of the Church laid down at the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, mentioned in the preceding chapter, was that Easter should be kept on the first Sunday after the full moon next following the 21st day of March. Some old Churches of the East had kept it on the 14th day of the moon, which was the day of the Jews' Passover, on whatever day of the week it fell. The Britons seem to have had this custom, which they supposed to be observed in the churches founded by St. John in Asia; but after the Council of Nice, wishing to correct their practice, they had still begun one day too soon." CHURTON'S "*Early English Church*," *p. 44. New York edition.*

of the hapless condition of the Britons. "The British church could not but be depressed when her sons suffered. What then COULD she do in this situation when, in addition to the attacks of the Saxon, the arm of the Italian church was stretched forth not to assist, but (as it finally turned out) to crush and enslave her. Does any one say the British church could at least protest? Aye! and so she did, most manfully and boldly. Her voice was heard, in the persons of her Bishops, her clergy* and her laity, protesting against

* The following declaration and protest of the clergy of Berkshire, 1240, will prove that however the fire of christian liberty may have been smothered in that dark period of the world's history, it was very far from being extinct. "The rectors of churches in Berkshire, all and each, say thus:

First, that it is not lawful to contribute money to support a man against the Emperor; for though the pope has excommunicated him, he has not been convicted or condemned as a heretic by any sentence of the church. And if he has seized or invaded the estates of the church of Rome, still it is not lawful for the church to resist force by force.

Secondly, that as the Roman church has its own estates, the management of which belongs to the lord pope, so have other churches theirs, granted them by gift and allowance of pious kings, princes and noblemen; which in no respect are liable to pay tax or tribute to the church of Rome.

Thirdly, although the law says, all things belong to the prince, this does not mean that they are part of his property and domain, but are under his care and charge; and in like manner the churches belong to the lord pope as to care and charge, not as to dominion and property. And when Christ said, "*Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my church,*" he committed only the charge, and not the property, to Peter, as is plain from the following words, "*Whatsoever thou shalt bind and loose upon earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven:*" not whatsoever thou shalt exact on earth shall be exacted in heaven.

Fourthly, inasmuch as it is plain from the authority of the Fathers, that the income of churches is appointed for certain uses, as for the church, the ministers and the poor, it ought not to be turned to other uses but by the authority of the whole church. Least of all ought the goods of the church to be taken to maintain war against christians.

Fifthly, that the king and nobles of England, by inheritance and good custom, have the right of patronage over the churches of England; and the rectors, holding livings under their patronage, cannot admit a custom hurtful to their property without their leave.

Sixthly, that churches were endowed, that rectors might afford hospitality to rich and poor according to their means; and if the intention of patrons is thus frustrated, they will not in future build or found churches, or be willing to give away livings.

Seventhly, that the pope promised, when he first asked for a contribution, never to repeat his demand: and that as a repeated act makes a custom, this second contribution will be drawn into an unusual and slavish precedent." Churton p. 319, 320.

the usurpation of Rome, from its commencement in the 6th century up to its close in the 16th."

"The British church produced a noble array of divines from Dinoth (Dunod) of Bangor, to Cranmer of Canterbury who from time to time did all they could to resist the uncanonical and anticatholic usurpation of her spiritual rights; but for centuries it was all in vain. They could only stave off the evil day for a time, and at length about the end of the Norman conquest, the catholic church of Britain, planted by apostolic hands, was completely forced beneath the feet of her unatural and ambitious sister, the church of Rome. With her religion went her political glory. And methinks, the hot blood of virtuous indignation must now crimson the cheek of England's sons, when they look back to those times that saw their soil, like their church, under the thraldom of an Italian Bishop! When their monarchs, the 2d Henry and his son (out upon such drivelling cowards!) disgraced their own and their country's name, the first by baring his back to be scourged by the *meek* and *unassuming* successor of the fisherman; and the last by humbly laying the crown of England at the footstool of the pope's legate."

"There was not, however, this pusillanimous submission on the part of the Spiritual sons of England.* They never, (no, not from the days of St. Paul up to his successors the English Bishops of this day) they never yet yielded up the mitre of catholic independence into the hands of the usurping Romans. The church of Britain was forced, it is true, to bow her head for a time, but her heart was as unbending as the gnarled oaks of her own native forests."

* William of Corboil, a French priest, elevated to the see of Canterbury, contrary to law and custom, and by intrigue, was the first ecclesiastic that attempted to betray the independence of the English church. Up to this time (1125) the pope had no jurisdiction in England—The church was under a head of its own, governed by the king in temporal matters, and by the archbishop of Canterbury in spiritual. William of Corboil made the primacy of England consist in acting as the pope's deputy. The church and nation were far from quietly yielding to his measures. The writers of the time never speak of William of Corboil, without expressing contempt for his meanness; and his name became a standing jest in merry old England. "He ought not to be called William of Corboil," says John Bromton, abbot of Jorval, "but William of Turmoil." "Truly I would speak his praises if I could," says Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, "but they are beyond expression for no man has yet discovered them." Churton p. 266, 268.

"Dinoth of Bangor is witness—Bishop Daganus is a later witness, for he would not eat at the same table, no, nor in the same house with these Roman schismatics.* The king and clergy of Northumberland are still later witnesses, for they treated with contempt, the papal mandate to restore his deposed Bishop, Wilfrid. And there was the giant arm of Wickliffe raised in later days, and noble was the blow he struck. And when he died in 1384, he bade by his example his followers, the old catholics of Britain, the members of this church of the living God, never to cease till their *protestations* terminated in *action*, and they had ejected that schismatic intruder who had placed his foot on their shores in 596. They never did cease.† Wickliffe's followers, known in history under the name of Lollards, kept up the protest which Dinoth of Bangor had raised, and which each succeeding age found bold and faithful spirits to prolong. The stake was prepared for them; but in vain, for they burnt at the stake, yet were true to the catholic faith. There is the bloody act of 1399, by which they were burnt, and the names of many of the noble sufferers on whom it took effect: but it all would not do. The flame lighted up Britain, it spread to Smithfield and added brightness to the death-light of Cranmer and his brother martyrs. It spread till it reached the continent, and Luther abroad, as well as the catholics in Britain (Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer) were nerved by the spirit of Wickliffe."

"But now came the time when the old, and oppressed church of Britain was able, as she had all along been *willing*, to eject the *intruding* and hence *schismatic* church of Rome. Four centuries had witnessed her struggles in vindication of religious freedom, and now in the good providence of God the day came when the prophetic words of the dying Grostête, were to receive their fulfilment, and the church of England "was set

* "Nam Daganus Episcopus ad nos veniens non solum cibum nobiscum, sed nec in eodem hospitio, quo vescebamur, sumere voluit." Bede L. ii. c. 4.

† Grostête, Bishop of Lincoln, and Sewel, archbishop of York, may be instanced among many other illustrious examples, of resistance to the claims of papal domination. The former, in the close of his letter to the Pope, employs the following strong and emphatic language; "Since the commands I have received are so contrary to the holiness of the Apostolic see, destructive to the souls of men, and against the catholic faith,—the very spirit of unity, the love of a son, and the obedience of a subject, command me to rebel." Churton p. 329.

free from the Egyptian bondage" under which she groaned "by the edge of a blood-stained sword."

"The Bishop of Italy," continues the eloquent divine* to whom I am indebted for many of the preceding observations, "the Bishop of Italy, called the Pope, had no more right in Great Britain than he had in these United States of America; and he has about as much right to spiritual supremacy in either, as the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Bishop of Pennsylvania has in Italy."

"When therefore the Bishop of Italy sent his messenger, Augustin, in the sixth century, to ask the catholic church in Britain to submit to him, and this being indignantly refused, he in after days *forced* that submission and by intrigue and treachery usurped her rights, there was no more than sheer justice returned, when the British church had the power, as she had in the 16th century, to eject the intruder, soul and body, and send the writ of ejectment by the hands of her lawful Bishops Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer. And this she did orderly, legally, canonically, completely. Ah! the British church, never forgot the year 596—no, not when her temples were over-run with foreign priests, her altars served by alien hands and her property devoured by alien mouths. She never forgot that year, though ten centuries had rolled round, during which she could only express her remembrance by strong protestations and ineffectual efforts. She never forgot that year; and when the 8th Henry, blotted out the pusillanimity of the 2d by proclaiming through the legal voice of the realm, the independence of our motherland of the Bishop of Rome, methinks the shades of Dinoth, with the other clergy who met the monk Augustin in the 6th century, the shades of Wickliffe and his martyred followers in the 14th century, clustered around Cranmer and his Brothers of the 16th century, and watched with an English churchman's interest, the royal signature which cancelled forever, (God grant it be so!) the foulest blot that ever stained England's cross, political or religious. From that period (the Reformation in the 16th century) the church of the living God—the church of St. Paul—the old British church, in her purity, in her zeal, faith and charity

* Rev. Wm. H. Odenheimer, Rector of St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia.

has been the boast and blessing of the land of our fathers. May the fires of Smithfield be again kindled and her children, to a man, burn and die at the stake, before they yield up the trust of catholic independence and suffer the disgrace of England's church to be told in her submission to a Bishop of Italy."

From the Church of England, thus rescued from the domination of Rome during the reign of Henry 8th, and again delivered after a temporary depression, under "the bloody Mary" —and purified and established in the days of Elizabeth—and once more restored from the desolations which swept like a flood over her under the iron rule of Cromwell the Protector, from this Church, like Israel of old, with Amalekites smiting her in the face and fiery serpents stinging at her feet, but still holding her onward way, ever looking to her glorious Head for guidance and protection—from this church, the uncompromising asserter of Catholic verity—the acknowledged bulwark of protestant principles—the dispenser, at this day, through her 18,000 clergymen, of the bread of life to the men of every clime and every complexion—from this church, upon the labors of whose missionaries the sun never sets—whose zeal the fire cannot destroy nor the floods quench—from this church, blessed, of God and blessing man, is derived the ministerial authority by which you have been brought into the visible fold of Christ, made members of his "one body" and united to the Ever-living Head. For such grace, mercy and privilege, God's holy name be ever blessed; and to Him, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour, praise and glory, world without end! *Amen.*

SERMON II.

"BUT WE DESIRE TO HEAR OF THEE WHAT THOU THINKEST: FOR AS CONCERNING THIS SECT, WE KNOW THAT EVERY WHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST."

ACTS xxviii. 22.

SUCH, Brethren, was the reply of the Jews at Rome, to the address of St. Paul, when he was sent a prisoner from Jerusalem to appear before Cæsar. To save his life he had appealed to the highest tribunal known to the laws of the empire, and after various vicissitudes by land and by sea, at length found himself within the walls of the imperial city. That his cause might not be prejudiced by the clamors of his own countrymen, whom he knew by past experience to be opposed to the religion which he taught, he assembled the chief of the Jews, a few days after his arrival, and stated to them the cause of his coming: namely, that being delivered into the hands of the Romans, though guilty of no crime, and about to be set at liberty because no cause of death was found in him, the Jews nevertheless spake against it; wherefore he was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar. "Not that I had ought to accuse my nation of:" said he: "For this cause therefore have I called for you to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. And they said unto him, we neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against."

By this sect, is undoubtedly meant, the sect of the Nazarenes or followers of Jesus Christ. It was the christian religion as taught by St. Paul and the other Apostles, which every where excited the opposition and the enmity of the Jews, and

indeed, generally, of all the nations to whom it was first preached. It was a religion of mortification and self-denial, which inculcated internal purity and moral rectitude, a religion that called for the exercise of constant vigilance over the thoughts, no less than a watchful circumspection of the conduct, that rendered it the object of almost universal dislike and aversion. Striking at the roots of temporal ambition, it contradicted the fondly cherished notions of the Jew in reference to national glory and exaltation,—hence it was to him a stumbling block and a stone of offence. Pronouncing of the Heathen gods that they were dumb idols—that the worship offered to them was not only vain but an abomination to the true God, who would call them into judgment for this perversion of their reason, it seemed to the Gentile a system of arrogance and presumption, and he rejected it as foolishness. Neither Jew nor Gentile in that age had any relish for the humbling doctrines of the Cross. Its charity was opposed to their pride, its humility seemed to them meanness, its temperance, ingratitude to providence in not partaking of its bounties, and its glorious promises as the wild dreams of fanaticism. Its simple rites and worship giving expression to the devout feelings of the heart, had nothing in them attractive to the unrenewed mind of man, when set in contrast with the imposing ceremonies of the Jewish ritual or the magnificence and pomp and splendor of Roman worship. It can be no cause of wonder then, that every where it was spoken against. Yet it was the truth of God, and the wisdom of God, and the power of God. Such it has proved itself to be, by eighteen centuries of endurance against the natural hatred of mankind, by dispelling the darkness of ignorance wherever its glorious light has shined upon our earth, and by subduing the understandings of millions to the dominion of truth and their hearts to the reign of happiness and peace. It would be interesting, Brethren, to trace this religion from its implantation in various countries by the labors of the apostles, and show how it has every where encountered opposition, and survived not only the overthrow of kingdoms, states and empires, but the passing away of entire races and whole nations of men. It is destined, perhaps, to encounter yet severer trials in its onward progress to universal dominion, but sure as Heaven's truth, it will put

down all opposition, and at last reign without a rival in our world.

But I have selected this text not for the purpose of considering the grounds of opposition to christianity originally. They present to our minds a very striking analogy in the position which the church occupies towards the world at the present day, and the character of the opposition which is arrayed against her. It is our purpose to inquire why she is every where spoken against, and whether opposition to her is not wilful or blind opposition against christianity itself.

First objection; authority of the ministry.

The first charge brought against the church, is exclusiveness of ministerial authority. If our claims upon the subject of the ministry be admitted, say those, who have separated themselves from our communion, then they are in schism. But as there are confessedly a great many pious people who are not Episcopalians, it would be very uncharitable and illiberal to say that they were guilty of schism, and we ought therefore to admit the validity of their orders.

Now we have stated the objection as it is commonly made, and let us meet it fairly and take, at the beginning, all the odium which usually attaches to the denial of its force and justice.

We ask, do piety and learning and gifts, of themselves, impart the power of Orders? It is not so pretended. Why will not a pious man receive the sacraments of a pious man simply because he is pious, or learned or possessed of aptness to teach? It is answered because he has not been ordained. Ordination then, it is clear, confers authority which is altogether separate and distinct from qualifications for office. Thus we say that a man ought to be pious and learned and apt to teach, in order to receive ordination, and that he may exercise his ministry profitably and to edification. But he may be ever so pious, and learned and apt to teach, and yet be no minister. Just so, a lawyer may be just, and upright and learned in the law, and yet not be in the office of a judge.—Qualification for office is one thing, authority to fill the office and exercise its functions is quite another and different thing.

If ordination then confers a power and authority distinct altogether from the qualifications for office, is it unreasonable

to ask and to demand the proof, whence that power and authority are derived? Would you permit any man by his decision to divest you of your rights and property, under the name of law, unless you were satisfied that he possessed the power and authority of a Judge? And why then should you allow any one to minister to you the sacraments of religion, unless convinced that he was invested with ministerial authority? Now here is the precise line of difference between us and surrounding denominations whose piety and learning and ability to instruct, we do not deny. We ask, whence your authority to act as ministers of religion? Can you show that it is derived from Christ and his apostles? If this can be shown, there is an end at once on our part, of all objection to the orders of dissenters, and we are more than ready to receive their ministrations. But if this cannot be shown, what else is the charge of exclusiveness brought against the Church, but a charge against the institution of Christ?

Ordination necessary; but how made valid?

As then ordination is necessary to confer ministerial authority, and it is so acknowledged, the question at once arises, how is the power of ordination to be proved? We answer that originally the authority to act in the name of Christ, in the appointments of religion was certified to the world by miracles. When the apostles and other first teachers of christianity travelled into various countries in fulfilment of the work with which they were charged, they spake with tongues—they healed the sick—they cast out devils—they raised the dead, and performed other and wonderful works, all of which were conclusive evidence to men that they were commissioned from on high. And at this day, if any one came to us bearing these unquestionable credentials—these impressive marks of Heaven's acknowledgment, there is not one of us that would demand any further proof of his authority. But as these proofs of the ministerial power are no longer vouchsafed—as miracles have long since ceased, how shall the authority of the christian ministry be certified and proven, in any other way, than by showing its transmission from the original root? Fruitful as the mind of man is in devising expedients to meet a difficult case, no other than this method, to prove a succession in the ministry, has ever been attempted

How authenticated.

by any, except by those who deny that there is any ministry at all established for the perpetual edification and government of the church. But there is a plain, common sense view to be taken of this subject, which seems to me, will convince any one of unprejudiced mind, not only that a ministry was established by Christ, but that it must of necessity have been continued all along to the present day, and will be perpetuated to the end of the world. For, first of all, Christ constituted a ministry, commissioning the apostles, before a church was gathered—before the New Testament or any part of it was written, and before any christian rite or sacrament was administered. His words to the Apostles are: "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth; Go ye therefore and teach, (or make disciples,) of all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo! I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."*

This declaration that he would be with them to the end of the world, conveys an assurance as definite as language can well express it, of the perpetuity of the christian ministry. But without dwelling on an interpretation which appears sufficiently obvious, we remark that the commission enjoins the performance of positive and explicit duties, namely: to baptize and teach all things whatsoever he had commanded them. We know most assuredly that the apostles did baptize and did administer the Lord's Supper. Were not these sacraments to be of perpetual obligation? Can any doubt, that they have been observed in every age of the Christian Church to the present day? Corrupted as they may have been, and undoubtedly were,—overloaded and obscured in their obvious purpose and design as they have been, by the superstitious addition's of man's presuming wisdom, is it not undeniably true, that they have been celebrated in every country where the religion of Christ has been professed, for the last eighteen centuries? Now what do these facts undeniably establish? Why, that the institution of sacraments pre-supposes the constitution of a ministry—and the perpetual obligation of the former—that is sacraments—proves the uninterrupted contin-

Necessary connexion of sacraments and a ministry.

* St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

uance of the latter. Not a week has passed, we may safely say, since the ascension, that baptism or the Lord's Supper, has not been celebrated in some part or other of the earth, and consequently not a day has passed without witnessing the existence of a ministry in the church. The connexion between them, is inseparable, and the fact that men have assumed the office of the ministry, proves that the conviction rested upon their minds, that a ministry and sacraments, must go together —that they could not be sundered without impugning the authority, and impairing the institution of Christ. Furthermore the institution of sacraments and the authority to administer them resting simply upon the command of Christ, both necessarily become integral parts of the same revelation. The same divine power that commissioned a ministry, commanded the observance of sacraments, and both would be utterly destitute of obligation, if they could not be shown to rest upon the declared will of him, to whom all power is given in Heaven and Earth.

Under this aspect of the case—that is, the ministry and sacraments being equally integral parts of revelation—equally of divine institution—may not one be altered, changed or abrogated, with as much show of reason as the other? Might not the pretended necessity which would justify an assumption of the ministerial authority and office, just as well authorise the entire disuse, or abrogation or alteration of the sacraments? I confess, that with every disposition to concede to men distinguished for piety, every thing upon this subject, which is not utterly repugnant to the plain declarations of Holy Writ and their unavoidable meaning, I can see no difference between the claims to obedience and submission, of those who undertake to change or dispense with the ministry and those who presume to abrogate the sacraments. They must stand or fall together. Consistency has indeed forced very many who have denied one, to reject the other. Thus the large and respectable body of Friends, otherwise known as Quakers, have alike repudiated the ministry and the sacraments of the Gospel, as of binding force and obligation upon the consciences of men. And as a general rule, we may observe, that those who undervalue the authority of the ministry as of divine institu-

Neglect of the ministry leads to neglect of the sacraments.

tion, make but little account of the sacraments of Christ's religion. They regard them as badges merely of profession—not necessary in any sense to salvation, and are consequently irregular, inconstant and infrequent in their observance. If it be true then, that Christ instituted a ministry and sacraments in his church—if it be clear that the sacraments are of perpetual obligation and cannot be dispensed or administered without a standing ministry—if the authority of the ministry cannot now be certified by miracles, it follows inevitably that this ministry can be known and verified only as proof shall be exhibited that the authority originally delegated by Christ to his apostles has been transmitted in an uninterrupted succession to those who at this day claim to exercise office in the Christian Church. This is what is termed the apostolic succession, for maintaining which, the charge of *exclusiveness* is brought against the church—this is one of the reasons why she "is every where spoken against." And yet, strange as it may appear, it is nevertheless demonstrably true, that all those who contend for the institution of a ministry authorized to act in Christ's name, in the appointments of religion, do adopt identically the same principle.* Hear the Confession of Faith of the Presby-

The Apostolic succession.

* Although religion be a concern which equally belongs to every man, yet it has pleased the all-wise Head of the Church, to appoint an order of men more particularly to minister in holy things.

If all the interests of the church are precious in the view of every enlightened Christian, it is evident that the mode of organization cannot be a trivial concern.

We agree with our Episcopal brethren in believing, that Christ hath appointed Officers in his church to preach the word, to administer sacraments, to dispense discipline, and to commit these powers to other faithful men. We believe as fully as they, that there are different classes and different denominations of officers in the Church of Christ; and that, among these, there is, and ought to be a due subordination. We concur with them in maintaining, that none are regularly invested with the ministerial character, or can with propriety be recognized in this character, but those who have been set apart to the office by persons lawfully clothed with the power of ordaining. We unite with such of them as hold the opinion, that Christians in all ages, are bound to make the Apostolic order of the Church, with respect to the ministry, as well as other points, the model, as far as possible, of all their ecclesiastical arrangements."—Dr. Miller, professor in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, at Princeton, New Jersey. Next hear Dr. McLeod, another Presbyterian and famous preacher. "*A person who is not ordained to office by a Presbytery has no right to be received as a minister of Christ;* his administration of ordinances is invalid; no divine blessing is promised upon his labors: it is rebellion against the Head of the Church to support

terian Church: "Unto this catholic visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth by his own presence and spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto." The same authority sets forth that Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are "holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace," appointed by Christ, for our "solemn admission into the Church," and for "confirming and sealing our interest in him;" and they are not to be dispensed by any but by a minister of the word lawfully ordained." Do we enquire who are "lawfully ordained ministers," according to the same standard? We are informed that "the Presbytery,—consisting of all the ministers, and one ruling elder from each congregation, within a certain district—or any three ministers and as many elders as may be present belonging to the Presbytery,—have power to examine and license candidates for the holy ministry; to ordain, instal, remove, and judge ministers." What then becomes of the charge of exclusiveness against the church—if the very same, upon identically the same grounds, may be urged against the Presbyterians and indeed all others who reject Episcopacy, but yet claim the power of ordination as grounded upon the commission of Christ to his apostles?—Let the truth be told, Brethren—honestly—openly—fairly. They flinch from the consequences of their declared and published sentiments. Professing a sound *principle* to which the truth of God's word compels them to subscribe, they *yet deny its application in practice*, because its practical exemplification would involve themselves in the same odious imputation of exclusiveness which they seek to cast upon the church.—To prove this let us ask the question; where is the power of ordination lodged in the Church of Christ? They reply, *in a council of Presbyters.* Who lodged it there? *The apostles acting under the authority of Christ, and guided by his holy spirit*,—say they. Now what is the inevitable conclusion from those positions? Why that none others than those presbyterially ordained, are law-

Presbyterians as *exclusive* as Episcopalians.

him in his pretensions: Christ has excluded him in his providence, from admission through the ordinary door, and if he has no evidence of miraculous power to testify his extraordinary mission, he is an impostor!" McLeod's Ecclesiastical Catechism.

ful ministers of Christ. There is no escape from this conclusion; for the apostles did not institute two modes of ordination, or leave the matter opened and unsettled by their practice. With them there was but one church—but one source of power and authority in it—and but one ministry.—"There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all."*—If Presbyterial ordination be the institution of God—Episcopal ordination must be of man. They cannot both be of divine authority, and consequently one or the other must be without just claims to the obedience of man. If the former, prove it by scripture and the voice of antiquity and we surrender Episcopacy upon the spot.

All history against the Presbyterian claim.

But that cannot be done my Brethren. The Bible must be changed and the writings of the Fathers must be changed, before it can be shown that Presbyterianism is of God and Episcopacy of man. The challenge of the judicious Hooker has remained unanswered some hundreds of years past, and is likely to continue so, some thousands of years to come. "A very strange thing, sure it were," he remarks, "that such a discipline as ye (the Puritans) speak of should be taught by Christ and his apostles in the word of God, and no church ever have found it out, nor received it until this present time. Contrariwise, the government against which ye bend yourselves, be observed everywhere, throughout all generations and ages of the Christian world, no church ever perceiving the word of God to be against it. We require you to find out but one church upon the face of the whole earth, that hath been ordered by your discipline, or hath not been ordered by ours, that is to say, by Episcopal regimen, since the time that the blessed Apostles were here conversant. Many things out of antiquity ye bring as if the purest times of the church had observed the self-same orders which you require; and as though your desire were that the churches of old, should be patterns for us to follow, and even glasses wherein we might see the practice of that, which by you is gathered out of scripture. But the truth is ye mean nothing less. All this is done for fashion's sake only; for ye complain of it as of an injury, that men

* Eph. iv. 4–6.

should be willed to seek for examples and patterns of government in any of those times that have been before."

Let those who reject Episcopacy meet this demand if they can—let them trace a succession of ordinations by Presbyteries, if they deem such a thing possible, and so far from charging them with exclusiveness, we will give up our own system and adopt theirs.

In the mean time let it not be forgotten that the assumption which they make—namely that presbyterial ordination has the authority of scripture and the sanction of primitive practice to uphold it, carries with it all the odious features which it is attempted to impress upon the claims of Episcopacy. If a council of presbyters only are invested with ordaining power, then ordination by a congregation is invalid, and this throws the Independents, or Congregationalists and the whole body of Baptists into schism—not only so, it determines against the validity of ordination by a Bishop, in whom alone the ordaining power resides according to our system, and consequently cuts off both Episcopalians and Methodists. Thus it is plain that the presbyterial system is to all intents and purposes as exclusive as any other. It is obliged to be so, my friends, in the very nature of things; for as Christ founded but one Church, and committed to it the ministry of reconciliation—that ministry whether constituted after the model of Congregationalism, Presbyterianism or Episcopacy, necessarily excludes all others. The grand question for us all to determine is, what was the form of government established in the primitive church—was it congregational, presbyterial, or episcopal? Shall we appeal to scripture? We read of Apostles—elders—and deacons, and it is agreed that these orders made up the ministry of the church in the days of the Apostles. We do not find mention once made of ordination by a congregation or by a council of presbyters—on the contrary, everywhere the ministerial authority is conferred expressly by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles—not only of the twelve, but of Paul and Barnabas—of Timothy and Titus. One single, solitary, passage occurs where the laying on of the hands of the presbytery is mentioned.* And even in that case we do

What was the ministry of the Primitive church.

* "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." 1 Tim. iv. 14.

not know that an ordination was referred to. But granting that it was an ordination, it seems that the presence and action of an Apostle was necessary to give it validity. For St. Paul, referring to the transaction, let the authority imparted by it, be what it may, says expressly it was by the putting on of his hands. (2 TIM: 1. 6.)

To meet the arguments of Episcopalians upon this subject, drawn from the plain warrant of scripture and the undoubted practice of the primitive church, it is alledged that the Apostles were extraordinary officers and could have no successors—and that after their decease, the government of the church necessarily devolved upon Presbyters. All this ought to be proven. We cannot consent to take mere assertion for argument. We may say however, in passing, that neither Barnabas, nor Silas, nor Junias, nor Andronicus, nor Timothy, nor Titus, appear to have exercised any extraordinary powers—or to have been extraordinary officers, and yet are they called apostles—and some of them we know exercised the power of ordination and governed the church.

Again: those who reject Episcopacy say that it was introduced by little and little about the beginning of the 2d century, so that before the council of Nice, A. D. 325, it was generally prevalent, and after that time was universal till the era

In answer to the presbyterian gloss on these words, we say: the word *presbytery* does not necessarily signify a body of presbyters, properly so called. It is as justly applicable to a council of Apostles—for every Apostle was in virtue of his office a Presbyter, but it by no means follows that every presbyter was an apostle. Every Governor of the State is ex-officio a Trustee of our University—but every Trustee is not therefore Governor of the State.

But let us see how ancient and wise men understood the term "*presbytery*" as here used by St. Paul.

St. Chrysostom says, "*He* (St. Paul) *does not here speak of Presbyters, but Bishops; for Presbyters do not ordain a Bishop.*" Theodoret. "*In this place he calls those Presbyters* (*i. e. old men*) *who had received the grace of the Apostleship.*"

Theophylact. "*That is, of Bishops; for Presbyters do not ordain a Bishop.*" "Others, as Jerome, Ambrose, and last but not least, JOHN CALVIN, maintain that the term presbytery refers to the office to which Timothy was then ordained, and interpret the passage thus: "Neglect not the gift of the presbytery or priesthood that is in thee, which was given by prophecy and the laying on of hands."

Lastly, hear St. Paul's explanation of his own words. "*Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*" 2 Tim. i. 6.

of the reformation. "A very strange matter, if it were true," says Archbishop Bancroft, "that Christ should erect a form of government for the ruling of his church, to continue from his departure out of the world, until his coming again, and that the same should never be thought of or put in practice for the space of fifteen hundred years: or at least, that the government and kingdom of Christ should then be overthrown, when by all men's confessions, the divinity of his person, the virtue of his priesthood, the power of his office as he is a prophet, and the honor of his kingly authority, was so godly, so learnedly, and so mightily established against the Arians in the council of Nice, as that the confession of the Christian faith, then set forth, hath ever since without contradiction been received in the church."

No record of any change.

Strange indeed that so wonderful a change in the form of church government, as that denoted by Episcopacy from parity should take place and no record be made of the fact—no detail of the circumstances by which it was effected be mentioned by so much as one writer. Strange beyond the power of explanation, that light and trivial matters about which Christians then differed, should find a place in the annals of those times, and yet the wonderful revolution from the presbyterial to the Episcopal mode of government pass utterly unnoticed. So early as the time of Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna and the disciple of St. John, the whole christian world was agitated by the question, on what day should Easter be observed? and Polycarp journeyed all the way from Asia to Rome to adjust the difference. Can we really think that such things would form matters of grave discussion, and the introduction of Episcopacy pass unheeded? When people make such demands of us, they must ask us to lay aside the common sense and understanding of men.

"When I shall see" says the learned Chillingworth, "all the fables in the metamorphosis acted, and proved true stories; when I shall see all the democracies and aristocracies in the world lie down and sleep, and awake into monarchies; then will I begin to believe, that presbyterial government, having continued in the church during the apostles' time, should presently after (against the Apostle's doctrine and the

will of Christ) be whirled about like a scene in a mask, and transformed into Episcopacy. In the meantime, while these things remain thus incredible, and in human reason impossible, I hope I shall have leave to conclude thus: Episcopal government is acknowledged to have been universally received in the church, presently after the Apostles' times."

"Between the apostles' times and this presently after, there was not time enough for, nor possibility of so great an alteration."

"And therefore, there was no such alteration as is pretended. And therefore, Episcopacy, being confessed to be so ancient and catholic, must be granted also to be Apostolic."

Perhaps enough has now been said to show that there is no just ground of complaint against the church, because of her exclusiveness. Since she occupies in this respect, the same position with others. If to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, be to render us exclusive, let it be even so.—We cannot help it. We dare not undertake to amend or alter that which divine wisdom has ordained and appointed.

Union upon proper grounds desired.

It gives me no pleasure, I am sure, to show the points of difference between ourselves and other denominations. I would that we were perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment, and that we all spake the same things. But when points of difference are misunderstood and especially when they are misrepresented, silence on my part would be an unworthy abandonment of known obligations—would be a criminal indifference to the prevalence of error—and a disregard of your most important and dearest interests. I have no sympathy, and I hope you have none, with that mawkish sensibility which fears the honest declaration of the truth, lest it make others feel unpleasant. I have no respect for that pretended liberality of opinion, which under the name of charity, will embrace all professions of Christianity as equally sound branches of the one catholic Church of Christ—and will cast into the shade all distinctive principles as non essential and of minor consequence. Christianity, Brethren, "rejoiceth in the truth," as well "as hopeth all things, and endureth all things." And while we dare not pronounce upon the character of those who follow unscriptural

and erroneous systems—while we leave them to the just and righteous judgment of that God before whom we must all stand at last, it is nevertheless our duty to show them their error, to lead them to embrace the truth and by all proper means aid them to attain eternal life.

Having therefore made a beginning upon this subject, I shall, God being my helper, go into it thoroughly and leave nothing untouched as to the order, doctrine and worship of the church, which may conduct you to a correct understanding of her principles and your own correspondent privileges and duties. And if I succeed in this, I know the necessary effect will be to inspire you with increasing reverence for the institutions which God has established—and with a deeper sense of gratitude to that good providence which has wrought wondrously and mercifully for you, and brought you into connexion with his holy church.

SERMON III.

"BUT WE DESIRE TO HEAR OF THEE WHAT THOU THINKEST: FOR AS CONCERNING THIS SECT, WE KNOW THAT EVERY WHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST."

ACTS xxviii. 22.

IT is not a little remarkable, that in the assaults made upon Christianity, both in ancient and modern times, the chief point of attack has ever been the ministry of the church. The reason is plain. Every system which proposes to teach men their duty in what most nearly concerns them, must have defenders. And this is more especially necessary, in a case where the instructions delivered, are professedly based upon the expression of the divine will. If there were not an order of men set for the defence of the Gospel, it would very soon cease to exert any influence, and like other systems, sink into oblivion, from the attacks of its enemies, and from the indifference of mankind to whatever does not in some way subserve their present interests. This must be apparent enough to any one who has been observant of the prevailing tone of moral feeling, in those communities where the gospel is seldom or never preached, and in those countries where its truths are much obscured and its doctrines much corrupted. The principles of Christianity impose a check upon the passions of men, and thus offer a restraint to those pursuits in which their passions lead them to engage. Its present rewards are not attractive to the unrenewed mind of man, while its promises are for the most part, future and distant. Hence its sanctions are of that awful and impressive character which the Bible addresses to our natural and instinctive fears, warning us of a judgment to come, and the solemn retributions of eternity; and hence it uses the language of authority.

The ministry a necessary defence of Christianity itself.

It was doubtless from a wise foresight of the proneness of the human mind to become engrossed with "temporal things" to the exclusion and neglect of the "things that are eternal," that God established his church, having in it appointments to keep alive the remembrance of our future accountability and most important interests, and committed to it the ministry of reconciliation, charged with the special duty of rousing men by warning and rebuke, from the slumbers of a careless and unreflecting life—and of quickening them in the pursuit of a heavenly crown by holding up to their view the glorious rewards of eternity.

That God did establish his church in the world, admits of no more question, than that he made a revelation to mankind. That he appointed a ministry in that church, deriving their authority to act in the appointments of religion from him, is equally plain and certain. That this authority, whatever it be, is delegated, no one will deny. By *delegated authority*, I mean of course, authority to act in the name of another. It is authority in opposition to that which is assumed. And that no one is allowed to assume such authority in the name of God, is manifest from the whole recorded history of the divine dispensations, as well as clear from express declarations of Holy Writ. "No man taketh this honor to himself"—says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews—"but he that is called of God as was Aaron." "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee."* Such a declaration, enforced by the reference to the illustrious examples mentioned by the Apostle in confirmation of its truth, must settle forever the question; whether the ministerial authority may be assumed or not—it must for ever stamp the seal of reprobation upon all assumptions of the ministry without warrant. Dr. McKnight, a learned Presbyterian divine of the church of Scotland, in his celebrated work on the Epistles, has these words: "The account of the designation, character and office of an high priest, the Apostle applies to Messiah, by observing, that as in the gospel church, no man can take the dignity of an high priest to himself but only the person who is called to the office, by God, like Aaron in the Jewish Church—so the

McKnight a Presbyterian, on the ministry of Christ.

* Heb. v. 4, 5.

Christ did not, by his own authority, assume the office of high priest in the house of God; but he bestowed that dignity upon him, who declared him *his son*, by raising him from the dead." Aaron was set apart and consecrated to the priesthood,—he and his sons,—after an open and public manner, according to the express command of God, by Moses. His consecration was the visible and declared designation to the office to which God had called him and his family. And when afterwards Korah and his company assumed to themselves the same office, and undertook to offer incense to the Lord, upon the alledged plea, that all the congregation were holy, God interposed in a singular and awful manner for their punishment, and commanded a memorial to be made to be a token to the children of Israel through their generations that no one who was not of the seed of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the Lord—that is to execute the office of priesthood—"lest he perish as did Korah and his company."* As Aaron was publicly called to his office—so was Christ. For it was not until his baptism in Jordan and the voice which came from God, proclaiming him to be his beloved Son, that Jesus began his public ministry.

Whatever then be the piety, the righteousness, and the learning of any man, they do not in themselves confer the power of office, however necessary they may be to the proper discharge of its duties. There are doubtless many men in our country qualified to fill the office of ambassador to foreign courts, yet no one is competent to fill the station unless he have received the requisite grant of authority to do so from the President and Senate. His knowledge and talents, be they ever so great, will not be taken as his credentials, to act as the representative of the government. Neither will his declaration cause him to be received as the nation's accredited agent. In short, he must present his commission and when that is received, his acts, whether he possess learning and skill in diplomacy or not, are valid and binding to the full extent, letter and spirit of his instructions.

Personal qualifications do not confer office.

Just so there are many possessed of high and eminent qualifications, by reason of their piety, knowledge and other gifts, to act as ambassadors of Christ. Still these talents, however

* Numb. xvi.

essential to the efficiency of the ministry do not any more make one a minister of Christ's religion—than knowledge and skill make another minister to a foreign court. The commission or authentic letter of authority derived from the true and proper source of power in both cases is indispensable to give validity to ministerial acts. In either instance, the minister acts not in his own name, but in the name of another. He is an agent and must act according to the tenor of given and prescribed instructions. The message which he bears may be most unpleasant to deliver; but it is not his own, but his who sends him, and he must deliver it even in the terms in which he received it, or prove faithless to his trust. Unless these things be so, Brethren, the government which God has established in his kingdom on Earth—called the Church—is less certain in its provisions—less definite in its objects—less wise in its appointments—less fixed in its arrangements and less sure in its results than the institutions of men. Once make the Church the mere figment of man's creation—once regard it in the light only of a human contrivance and subject to the alteration or amendment of man's presuming wisdom, in any of its original and essential features, and all vitality is gone from its laws—all authority from its enactments—all confidence from its promises and all the assurance of heavenly hope from the participation of its ordinances. It becomes the frail and tottering fabric of man's caprice—built up of "hay and stubble," and doomed to "suffer loss" when proved by the purifying fires of God's truth—Such is not the church of God built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone—Such is not the holy citadel of faith, hope and charity, against which the gates of Hell shall not prevail. "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever." Thus sang David, under the law: and if his words, inspired by the Holy Ghost, were true of Jerusalem or Zion, the type of the christian church, how much more shall they not be thought applicable in every respect to that which St. Paul calls the "House of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."*

* 1 Tim. iii. 15.

In these views perhaps we shall all be found to agree. None will deny the authority and perpetuity of Christ's church: none will question the fact that the christian ministry is a purely delegated power deriving its authority alone from God. If any deny this last position, we leave him to settle the point with St. Paul, who says: "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."* And again, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."† Language of the like import, abounds in the New Testament. "The glorious gospel of the blessed God," which says St. Paul, "was committed to my trust."‡ "So account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."§ "Approving ourselves as the ministers of God."¶ "Seeing we have this ministry we faint not."** "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and, hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation."†† "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."‡‡ "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfil it."§§ "Make full proof of thy ministry."¶¶ Thus, by whatever terms, office in the church is described—whether trust, ambassadorship, stewardship or ministry, we are at once reminded of its delegated character, and that great and solemn responsibility, from the very nature, design and authority of the charge, attaches to its management.

The Ministry a purely *delegated* power.

Indeed it seems wonderful that any other view should ever have been taken of this subject, and that the idea should have been entertained that the ministry was not to be perpetuated as originally constituted in the New Testament. For when we open that little volume and inquire into the character of Christ's religion, we are met at the outset by the information that the Gospel is to be preached to all nations and that its institutions are to run co-eval with its propagation and extension even to the end of the world. We read that sacraments were ordained of Christ and were to be observed by all those in all places where the faith was embraced. Has not this religion come

* 1 Thess. ii. 4. † 2 Cor. v. 20. ‡ 1 Tim. i. 11. § 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.
¶ 2 Cor. vi. 4. ** 2 Cor. iv. 1. †† 2 Cor. v. 18. ‡‡ 1 Tim. i. 12.
§§ 2 Tim. iv. 5. ¶¶ Col. iv. 17.

down even to us? Have not its sacraments been administered for the last eighteen centuries, wherever faith in the Saviour has been proclaimed and received. By whom, Brethren, has this faith been preached and these sacraments been duly administered? There can be but one answer to these questions. We must say by the ministry. The church, sacraments and ministry thus become witnesses to the truth of Christ's religion. During the darkest period of the world's history—when the light of God's truth shone dimly, when the doctrine of Christ was most obscured by the traditions of men and when corruptions most marred the fair form of Christianity under papal misrule and usurpation, still the church, sacraments and ministry existed and gave united testimony to the world that Jesus had died and that through his name salvation was yet assured to the hope of perishing man. The great facts upon which the doctrine of redemption is founded, have thus been preserved to the world and would be again, should darkness once more cover the earth and gross darkness the people.

It is not denied by any, so far as I know, that Christ, after his resurrection and previous to his ascension into Heaven, commissioned the eleven Apostles to gather his church and settle its order and government. During the last forty days of his continuance upon earth, we are told, he came to them from time to time, giving them commandments, and "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."* It is not to be supposed in reason then, that they were left in ignorance as to the extent of their powers or as to the order of administration which Christ would have established in his church. Still less is this supposition reasonable when we remember that the Apostles were under the guidance of that holy spirit which was to lead them into all truth and to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that Jesus had said unto them. In fulfilment of their trust, it is certain that they in a public manner ordained Matthias in the place of Judas, and "he was numbered with the eleven Apostles."† Equally clear and certain is it, that others, as Paul and Barnabas and Silas, and Timothy and Titus and James, were called Apostles—and that they exercised the powers of Apostles in governing the church, and in ordaining to the holy ministry. These there-

Others of the Primitive church *Apostles* besides the twelve.

* Acts i. 3. † Acts i. 26.

fore according to the express language of scripture, constituted the first or highest order of the gospel ministry. The testimony is equally direct and conclusive as to the constitution of the *second* and *third* orders of the ministry, viz: the order of Elders, Bishops or Presbyters as they are interchangeably* termed in the New Testament, and the order of Deacons. These are the orders of the christian ministry as unquestionably established in the days of the Apostles. The testimony of the New Testament is silent as to any other order of administration. Its canon closes with this arrangement, and if any change or alteration of this order was made, the evidence of it must be sought for elsewhere than in the records of inspiration. The assertions therefore that Christ and his Apostles left no specific directions as to the order and government of the church, and that the whole subject was left open to the exigencies of times and occasions, are wholly gratuitous—utterly destitute of proof and flatly contradicted by the fact that Christ continued forty days with the Apostles giving them commandments and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God—and by the fact also that the Apostles did

* It is freely admitted by Episcopalians that these terms are thus interchangeably used in the New Testament. The admission is improved into an argument in the hands of the opponents of Episcopacy, who most preposterously argue from a community of names to a community in rank or order. The fallacy of the argument has been too frequently exposed to need repetition here. But it may nevertheless be useful to subjoin the testimonies of Theodoret and Isidore on this subject, who lived in the 5th century and whose evidence in the case will probably be considered by the "wise and prudent," conclusive.

Theodoret. "Epaphroditus was called the Apostle of the Philippians, because he was entrusted with the Episcopal government, as being their Bishop. For those now called Bishops, were anciently called Apostles; but in process of time, the name of Apostle was left to those who were truly Apostles, and the name of Bishop was restrained to those who were anciently called Apostles: Thus Epaphroditus was the Apostle of the Philippians, Titus of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics."

Isidore. "The Bishops succeeded the Apostles—they were constituted through the whole world in the place of the Apostles." Isidore then says, that "Aaron the High Priest, was what a Bishop is, and Aaron's sons prefigured the Presbyters."

Mosheim, who will not be suspected of any undue partiality towards Episcopacy, says of Isidore, the Bishop of Pelusium. "He was a man of uncommon learning and sanctity. A great number of his Epistles are yet extant, and discover more piety, genius, erudition and wisdom, than are to be found in the voluminous productions of many other writers."

admit others into their number, and did ordain Presbyters and Deacons. The obscurity and lack of precision which some men allege to be thrown around the order and government of the Apostolic Church, are nothing short of empty pretences, and are about as available to excuse their irregularities and schisms, as the alleged mysteries of faith are to excuse the indifference and sin of unbelief.

The three-fold constitution of the ministry as above stated, composed of Apostles, Presbyters and Deacons in their respective orders, we hold to be the form of church government as clearly defined in the New Testament. As it was established by divine authority and undeniably continued till the canon, and of course the testimony of sacred scripture, was closed we are compelled to regard it as of perpetual obligation and unchangeable, until authority can be shown to alter it.*

If we would inquire as to the powers which these three orders exercised respectively, we must look at their commissions and at their acts. As to the Apostles we find that thirteen of them were special witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They were chosen for that specific purpose; and so far could have no successors. For the idea of witnesses having successors carries absurdity on its very face. They may be cotemporaneous witnesses to the same matters of fact, as the five hundred brethren who saw Christ after his resurrection on a mountain in Galilee, were with the Apostles then present, witnesses of one and the same fact. But to bear testimony to the resurrection of Christ was not the only duty with which the Apostles were charged. If we turn to their commission we shall see that they were specially charged to preach the gospel to all nations and to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Accordingly we find, in tracing the history of their acts, that they not only testified that Christ was raised from the dead, but also preached, and baptized for the remission of sins, and that they ordained others to the performance of the like offices. They, or at least a portion of them, possessed also the power of conferring the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost by

The first Apostles not witnesses merely; but ministers also in the ordinary sense, and chief governors of the church.

* Archbishop Whately's preposterous concessions upon this point to the contrary notwithstanding.

the imposition of their hands. Some of them also were endowed with the spirit of prophecy. In these things then: as witnesses of the resurrection of Christ—as prophets—as bestowers of miraculous gifts, their office was extraordinary and as such they had no successors.

But it is remarkable that in the commission given to the apostles, which was antecedent to the day of Pentecost when they received the gift of the Holy Ghost—no reference is made to their extraordinary powers. The tenor of their commission as recorded by St. Matthew and St. John, runs thus. "All power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world."* "Then said Jesus to them again," are the words of St. John, "Peace be unto you: As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you: And when he had said this he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain they are retained."†

These last words, respecting the power of remitting and retaining sins, are generally understood as conveying the power of discipline—of inflicting and removing church censures—a power claimed and exercised by all denominations to this extent, and indeed indispensable to the preservation of purity and order in any society whatever.

The commission of the Apostles sets forth that they are to preach—to baptize—and to exercise discipline. And certainly so far at least no one will deny that they may and ever have had successors in office. But the commission, as recorded by both the evangelists, clearly indicates that they were invested with yet higher powers. Besides making disciples of all nations—which is regarded as a more correct rendering, than *teaching all nations*—and baptizing them; they are furthermore to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded. Now as these things whatever they were, are not specifically set forth in the commission itself, it seems reasonable to conclude that we must search for them in what the Apostles taught and in what they did. They have re-

* St. Matt. xxviii. 18–20. † St. John xx. 21–23.

corded what they taught and what they did also: at least to a sufficient extent, we must suppose, to furnish the man of God thoroughly unto every good word and work. And among the things which they did, acting under Christ's commission, we know that they ordained to the ministry, and in so doing not only established a precedent for those whom they thus ordained, to do as they had done, but moreover gave express directions to that end. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses," says St. Paul to Timothy, "the same commit thou, to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."*

The words of St. John in recording the grant of authority to the Apostles, convey the idea of still more ample powers. "As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you:" and then breathing on them said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Whatever may be made out of these words, no one will deny that this much at least is certain, that Christ invests his Apostles with full power and authority to settle the order, and administer the affairs of his kingdom on earth. Whatever then they taught, and commanded in pursuance of this object, we hold to be binding upon the consciences of all believers. That they ordained elders is not denied—that these elders ministered in the church in subordination to a higher order of the ministry called Apostles, is as clear as any other fact recorded in the sacred writings—that not a single instance of the elders exercising the power of ordination, has ever been clearly made out is just as certain, as that the higher or apostolic order did exercise that power. That the Apostles ordained Deacons is admitted —that these deacons both preached and baptized, and so far were ministers, stands as plainly recorded in the Acts of the Apostles as any thing else to be read therein. Here then, Brethren, in the ministry of the church thus constituted of Apostles, Presbyters and Deacons, is that Episcopacy for which we contend as the order established by divine wisdom in Christ's kingdom on earth. Christ said he would be with the Apostles "always, even unto the end of the world." Are we to suppose then that the Apostles left the church destitute of a ministry—that they left the whole body of believers throughout the world, in Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome,

What the Apostles did as binding as what they taught; what did they?

* 2 Tim. ii. 2

Corinth, and a hundred other places where they had planted the faith of the gospel, in an unorganized state—left them to choose a ministry and ordain them from among themselves—to define their powers and settle the limits of their jurisdiction? Such a supposition lies not within the boundaries of the most extravagant credulity. It would be an example without precedent in the history of man. It was a thing plainly impossible from the very nature of the christian institution, having ordinances to be administered, and by necessary consequence, requiring an order of men for that purpose, invested with power and authority to perpetuate the office of administration. And accordingly the very first witnesses that present themselves to our examination, after the writers of the New Testament had passed off the stage of action—witnesses, some of whom saw and conversed with the apostles and laboured with them in their ministry—witnesses, upon whom we are obliged to rely, to prove the authenticity and genuineness of the new Testament—these witnesses testify, with one voice, that the ministry of the church in their day was constituted after the model of the Apostolic age—that *they* did not establish it, after the form or order in which it existed among them; but that they had so received it from the apostles themselves. To illustrate the value of these witnesses, let us ask, how know we that the book called the New Testament was written in the age of the apostles and by the disciples of Christ? Thomas Paine asserts that it was written three hundred years later. How do we meet this bold and unblushing assertion of infidelity? Simply by referring to the writings of the Fathers of the first three centuries. They make mention of the gospels of the New Testament and of other portions of the same work and quote passages from it. Is their testimony then good and sufficient to settle the simple question of fact, whether the New Testament was in existence in their respective ages or not? If yea, then why is not the same testimony equally available to settle the question of fact, as to what was the order of the Christian ministry. Let us hear them speak for themselves. We begin with Clement of Rome, whom St. Paul commends as his fellow laborer in his epistle to the Philippi-

The use to be made of the writers of the first three centuries.

ans. He wrote about 40 years after our Lord's death and during the life-time of St. John.

He says in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians.* "*The apostles preaching through countries and cities, appointed the first fruits of their conversions to be bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe.*"—"*The apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there should contentions arise concerning the episcopal name* (or *order*) *and for this cause, having perfect foreknowledge* (of these things,) *they did ordain, those whom we have mentioned before; and moreover, did establish the constitution, that other approved men should succeed those who died in their office and ministry.*"—"*To the high priest his proper offices were appointed; the priests had their proper order, and the levites their peculiar services or deaconships; and the laymen what was proper for laymen.*" This St. Clement applies to the distribution of orders in the Christian Church, bishops, priests and deacons.

Such is the plain, unequivocal and decisive testimony of the earliest ecclesiastical writer, whose works have reached us, next after the apostles. A writer who was himself chosen by the apostles and appointed to preside as bishop over one of the churches which they had planted.

The next witness we produce is Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 71. He was constituted Bishop of Antioch, by the apostles then living, and wrote epistles to various churches, while on his journey to Rome, in which he exhorts the inferior ministers, presbyters and deacons, to be in subjection to their bishop. He sealed the truth of his religion by suffering martyrdom, being thrown to wild beasts at Rome, by order of Trajan, less than ten years after the death of St. John, or about A. D. 107. To the Ephesians, after speaking of their "excellent bishop Onesimus," he thus writes: "*For even Jesus Christ our inseparable life, is sent by the will of the Father; as the bishops, appointed unto the utmost bounds of the earth, are by the will of Jesus Christ.*"

To the Magnesians: "*I exhort you that you study to do all things in a divine concord; your bishop presiding in the*

* See Oxford Edition, 1677, §. 42, p. 89.

place of God, your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles; and your deacons most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ." Such language partakes largely, you perceive, of the hyperbolical style of the orientals. We are quoting Ignatius, you will remember, not to settle the point of reverence and dignity due to the ministry, but to show the fact stated, that the ministry consisted of three orders. In this same epistle he mentions by name, the bishop Damas, the presbyters Bassus and Apollonias, and the deacon Sotia.

To the Trallians: "*Let all reverence the deacons as Jesus Christ, and the bishop as the Father, and the presbyters as the Sandhedrim of God and college of the apostles—he that does any thing without the bishop and presbyters and deacons, is not pure in his conscience.*"

To the Philadelphians: "*To those who were in unity with their bishop and presbyters and deacons—there is one bishop with his presbyters, and the deacons my fellow servants—Give heed to the bishop and to the presbytery and to the deacons—do nothing without the bishop.*"

To the Smyrneans, over whom Polycarp the disciple of St. John, presided as bishop: "*See that ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ did the Father; and the presbyters as the apostles; and reverence the deacons as the command of God—my soul be security for them that submit to their bishop with their presbyters and deacons.*"

Is it posible for any intelligent and sound mind to read these quotations and come to any other conclusion than that there were three orders,—bishops, priests and deacons—in the christian ministry in the age of Ignatius? If his words prove any thing they undoubtedly show that in the first century, the Christian Church was episcopally constituted—that the three orders of the ministry were regarded as of divine institution and considered necessary to the regular constitution of every church.

We next cite Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. In his epistle to the Philippians he says: "*Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him, to the Church of God which is at Philippi, &c.*"—"*the deacons must be blameless as the ministers of God in Christ and not of men*"—"*being subject to the priests and*

deacons—and let the elders be compassionate—and merciful towards all." Here again is direct evidence against that parity which opposes itself to episcopacy.

We come to the second century, and here we find Irenæus the disciple of Polycarp, and Bishop of Lyons, A. D. 180, using the succession of Bishops from the apostles as an argument against heretics. He says: "*We can reckon up those whom the apostles ordained to be bishops in the several churches and who they were that succeeded them down to our time.*" *And he proceeds to give us the succession from the apostles down to Eleutherius, the 12th in order, who was Bishop of Rome when Irenæus wrote.* Clement of Alexandria, the cotemporary of Irenæus, enumerates the three several and distinct orders, with their respective offices. His words are, "*There are some precepts which relate to presbyters, others which belong to bishops, and others respecting deacons.*"

Tertullian, a celebrated presbyter of the church in Africa, lived at the close of the 2nd and in the forepart of the 3rd century. He testifies that bishops were settled in his native land and had been so from the earliest introduction of the gospel into the country. Writing against heretics, he says, "*let them show the order of their bishops, that by their succession deduced from the beginning, we may see whether their first bishop had any of the apostles or apostolical men, who did likewise persevere with the apostles, for his founder and predecessors; for thus the apostolical churches do derive their succession, as the church of Smyrna from Polycarp, whom John the apostle placed there—the church of Rome from Clement, &c.*"

Speaking of baptism, Tertullian says: "*The bishop has the power of conferring baptism, and under him the presbyters and deacons, but not without the authority of the bishop.*"

Origen, another famous presbyter of the same age, in his comment on the Lord's prayer has these words—"*there is a debt due to deacons, another to presbyters, and another to bishops, which is the greatest of all and exacted by the Saviour of the whole church and who will severely punish the non payment of it.*"

Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, A. D. 240. From the writings of this illustrious Father, we might compile a volume upon the

subject before us. He expressly refers the constitution of the ministry in the orders of bishops, presbyters and deacons to the will of Christ and the apostles.

Ep. xlv. to Cornelius, bishop of Rome. "*We ought chiefly, my Brother, to endeavour to keep that unity which was enjoined by our Lord and his apostles to us their successors, to be carefully observed by us.*"

Ep. lxvi. to Florentius. "*Christ said to the apostles and by that, to all Bishops or governors of his church who succeed the Apostles by vicarious ordination and are in their stead 'He that heareth you heareth me.'*"

Ep. lxxx. Successio. "*Valerian (the emperor) wrote to the Senate that the Bishops and the Presbyters and the Deacons should be prosecuted.*"

Optatus Milevitanus, A. D. 365, Bishop of Mileve, or Mela, in Africa. "*The church has her several members, bishops, presbyters, deacons, and the company of the faithful.*"

"*You found in the church, deacons, presbyters, bishops: you have made them laymen; acknowledge that you have subverted souls.*" L. 2. Con. Parmenianum.

If the time allowed we might quote from Ambrose of Milan, A. D. 370. Jerome, A. D. 380. St. Augustin, A. D. 420, and many others both before and after them—particularly Eusebius, A. D. 320, the first ecclesiastical historian, and who has given us catalogues of the bishops by name, in the order of their succession, in all the principal churches from the Apostles down to his time—They all testify to the three-fold constitution of the ministry and the authority of bishops to ordain and to govern the church. We might quote from that very ancient work, certainly existing in the 3rd century, called the Apostolic canons,* to prove the same thing.—From the decrees of councils, in ages when the faith, doctrine and order of the Gospel were confessedly kept pure by the great body of the faithful. We might travel along down the stream of time, through all the adverse and prosperous conditions of the church—when

* "The *Apostolic Canons* are eighty-five ecclesiastical laws or rules, professedly enacted by the Apostles, and collected and preserved by Clemens Romanus. The matter of them is ancient; for they describe the customs and institutions of Christians, particularly of the Greek and Oriental churches, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. But the phraseology indicates a compiler living in the 3rd century." *Murdoch's Mosheim, vol. i. p.* 224, *v.* 13. (New Haven, 1832.)

oppressed and when protected—when maintaining purity of doctrine and practice, and when introducing and sanctioning corruptions, and all along we shall find an accumulation of evidence to the fact we have been laboring to establish, that Episcopacy was the settled order and government of the church. We might cite abundant authorities, even the most learned and distinguished of those who have rejected Episcopacy to show that from the 2nd century down to the 16th it was of universal prevalence in the christian church. We might bring forward the Lutherans, Calvin, Beza, Melancthon and others to prove not only the lawfulness of Episcopacy,* but the lamentable necessity which some of them pleaded to justify their formation of another and different system of church government. But what would it all avail? Men of this age have become wiser than the Apostles, the Fathers and the Reformers—wiser and holier than those who sealed their testimony to Christ's truth, and their fidelity to his cause with their blood—and they ask what are all your proofs worth? The succession is incapable of proof or it has been broken—or it has been vitiated and rendered worthless by the corruption of those through whose hands it has come!—Let us then meet them on these grounds and consider these their strong reasons.

The common objection to the Apostolic Succession.

1. The succession is incapable of proof. Is the testimony of Clement, Ignatius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Eusebius, Ambrose, Jerome, Austin and others, sufficient to prove the authenticity and uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament in their respective ages? Then why is their testimony to be rejected when it equally proves the establishment and universal prevalence of Episcopacy? Is the New Testament to be rejected because you cannot show by direct and positive evidence, that it was in existence every year since it was written? Then why is Episcopacy to be repudiated, unless you prove its existence every single year by positive proof, since the death of the Apostles? But copies of the New Testament were multiplied very soon and spread over the world and most carefully guarded against alteration. And so bishops were multiplied as the faith of the gospel spread, and their office was neither sought after, because it

* See Appendix A.

was the post of chief danger in times of persecution, and in this state the church was till 320—and the office itself was most carefully fenced by canons against intrusion into it, or unwarrantable assumption of its powers. The first of the Apostolical canons reads "Let a Bishop be consecrated by two or three Bishops."

The principle which may settle the controversy. Ordination! What is it?

Now here is the statement of a principle, Brethren, upon which this whole controversy about the succession turns. What is ordination? It is nothing more nor less than designation to office —or the right to exercise certain powers delegated by the great head of the church for the edification of his members? You are not to imagine that we hold that a sort of mysterious influence or invisible virtue has been streaming down from the hands of Bishops upon the heads of those whom they have ordained in all past ages, and that this is the Apostolical Succession. No! It is simply the right to exercise certain functions, certified by its proper evidence—ordination is a thing transacted openly and publicly in which ordinarily many persons take part. But the Apostolical canon requires that a bishop shall be ordained by at least two or three bishops, and the proof of this fact, in the absence of miracles, is the proper certificate to all persons that the person ordained is invested with that delegated authority, which he could not of right assume. In short, ordination is the regular induction to office by lawful authority in opposition to its unauthorised and arrogant assumption. Now it is clear that such a fact is as capable of proof as any other fact. And consequently a succession of *ordinations* is of far more easy proof —than *lineal succession*—such for example as the succession of the Aaronic priesthood. For the ordination of a bishop would only take place at the end of his predecessor's life—consequently the proofs would have to be produced at long intervals—after considerable periods of time had elapsed, and the longer a Bishop lived, the fewer would be the number of links in the chain of succession. Thus the Episcopate of the late Bishop White of Pennsylvania extended through fifty years; he is therefore the only link between John Moore, archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated Feb. 12, 1775 and Jackson

Kemper, the present Bishop of Missouri, consecrated by Bishop White, Sept. 25, 1835. And hence,

Proof of official descent more easily proved than natural.

It is far easier to trace the Episcopal succession through hundreds of years, than it is for any living man to trace his descent to his great grandfather. The truth of lineal descent, in every step, is dependent upon the veracity of a single witness —and that is the mother in each case: Whereas the truth and certainty of the Episcopal succession are made evident by the testimony of many witnesses to a public transaction, which is made matter of public record. No one questions the succession of the Aaronic priesthood which we all know was transmitted by carnal descent; although the truth of that succession depended in each descent, upon the single testimony of a woman as to a point of which no human being besides herself could have any certain knowledge. And yet, with such a fact as this admitted and unquestioned, men who stand up before the people to argue questions of theology, will in the face of day, gravely assert that the Apostolical succession is incapable of proof!

Is it morally possible, think you, that any man could successfully claim and exercise the Episcopal office in the Catholic Church of this country or in England at this day, without showing that he had received Episcopal consecration or ordination? You know well what would be the fate of any such effort—you know that it would meet with the ridicule and contempt which have attended the foolish attempts of Dashiell and George M. West, to set up a pseudo-Episcopacy. If then such a thing be morally impossible now, let those who declaim against the apostolical succession, show how it was morally possible in any preceding age of the church, acting under identically the same rule of ordination or consecration. The rule of the church of the first three centuries was, as we have already shown, that "a Bishop be ordained by two or three Bishops"—this rule is repeated at the general council of Nice, 325, A. D.—only with its provisions extended so as to make Episcopal consecrations more difficult of performance, thereby increasing the evidence to the fact in each case, in these words: "A Bishop ought to be constituted by all the Bishops of the province, but if this be not practicable by reason of urgent

necessity, three must by all means meet together, and with the consent of those that are absent, let them perform the ordination." Such was the regulation established in every church throughout the world—in the British, the Gallican, the Spanish, the Roman, the Carthaginian, the Alexandrian, the Antiochean and all others. Such is nearly the identical rule that prevails in the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

Trace the lines of Episcopal succession wherever you please, that at Canterbury, at Arles or Lyons in France, or at Rome, or at Constantinople, and what does it prove? Why, that these churches never allowed of any other than Episcopal consecration or ordination. If then the rejectors of Episcopacy will take any of these lists and show where it is defective—if they will show us cause to believe that in any one case or in any number of cases, the rule established throughout the church has been violated or neglected or evaded, we shall then have before us a matter admitting of discussion—But until this is done, we shall take their broad declarations about the Episcopal succession, as naked assertions, which can only be met by positive and direct and unequivocal denial. (Appendix B.) But the Episcopal succession, they say, has been broken. When asked in what instance, we are referred to the alleged elevation of a woman named *Joan*, to the Papacy in the 9th century. Now be it observed here that whether the story be true or false, it does not invalidate the succession even as maintained by Romanists—much less does it oppugn the strength of the argument and evidence which sustains the succession in the Episcopal churches which have dissented from Rome. I am in no way concerned to prove or disprove the truth of the story, otherwise than as every man is concerned to know the certainty of history; for as I shall show the succession for which we contend, although it is indirectly connected with the Roman church, as christianity itself at one time was, yet it does not run through the line of Roman Pontiffs at all—But let us consider the story itself. Mosheim,* the ecclesiastical histo-

The story of Pope Joan does not effect this question at all.

* *Gieseler*, who cares little for the Apostolic succession, shows that the alleged Papacy of Joan, is not only apocryphal, but chronologically impossible, there being scarce any interval between LEO IV. and BENEDICT III. See *Cunningham's Translation, vol.* ii. *p.* 20. (Philadelphia edition.)

rian, whose authority in this case at least will not be questioned, says that "between the pontificate of Leo IV. who died in the year 855, and that of Benedict III. a certain woman, who had the art to disguise her sex for a sonsiderable time, *is said* by learning, genius and dexterity, to have made good her way to the papal chair, and to have governed the church with the title and dignity of pontiff about two years." After stating that this story gave rise to long and embittered discussion, some asserting and others denying its truth, he expresses his opinion that some unusual event had occurred at Rome, and concludes by observing that "what it was that gave rise to this story is yet to be discovered, and is likely to remain so." According to history the whole rests upon a *say so*—it is at best but a flimsy argument that can be constructed upon so insecure a foundation. But take it as all true, out and out, does it invalidate the Episcopal succession? Not at all. For first of all, if it did, it must be shown that the Popes of Rome consecrate bishops—which they do not—and secondly, it must be shown that during the two years in which Joan is said to have swayed the papal sceptre, all the bishops in the Roman Church must have died—and that Joan herself consecrated successors to them—and this would indeed have broken the chain of Roman succession. But it must be shown, thirdly, in order to invalidate the succession in other churches, that all the bishops the world over must have died in those two years—that the churches in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, in all Greece, in all Africa, in all the East, lost all their bishops within those two years when Joan was in the papal chair. Now, willing as we are to stretch the line of credulity to the measure of other men's demands in order to please them, this is rather further than in reason or in common sense we can go. The truth is, that those who have thrown away Episcopacy, feel bound to show reason for abandoning an institution so ancient and attended by so many marks of its scriptural authority; and being hard pressed for arguments, they have caught at this story about Pope Joan, which combines the plausible with the ridiculous, to demolish the whole theory, as they think, of the apostolical succession. They know well that ridicule often prevails, when solid arguments are lacking, and boldly asserting that a woman was once Pope,

ask what is such a succession worth?—as though they had destroyed the apostolical succession by showing that a link was lacking in the Roman chain! But I would ask what becomes of the succession in the British church?—The bishops of that church were not consecrated by the pope of Rome—the same may be asked of any other church?—what becomes of the succession in Spain, in France, in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, in Greece, in other Eastern churches? Why, had the Pope undertaken to consecrate bishops for all these, he might have abandoned every thing else, and the triple crown had sat heavily indeed on his brows—too heavily indeed for any mortal to bear! The truth is, as before stated, the Pope does not consecrate bishops at all—unless it be some in Rome or parts adjacent, of which I am not certainly informed one way or the other,—and therefore the validity of the succession has nothing to do with the question who is Pope, or whether there be any Pope at all. One remark more before quitting this part of the subject: I would ask those who are so fond of quoting Pope Joan and her reign of two years to destroy the succession, whether the usurpation of Queen Athaliah for six years of the throne of David—and the destruction by her of all the seed royal but Joash, vitiated the promise of God to David that *a man should not fail him to sit upon his throne!* Did the intrusion of Athaliah for six years destroy or break the line of succession of kings to come from his loins? or invalidate God's promise?

The succession of bishops in the church not through the Popes of Rome.

But after all, say the opponents of the apostolical succession, although you make out your case by historical testimony, yet the succession comes through channels so impure that we cannot receive it. This objection is grounded on the gratuitous assumption, that the succession must be traced through the Roman pontiffs. Now as already stated, the succession does not run in this channel, because the pontiff does not consecrate. We will state here upon the authority of the Romish canon law, what power the Pope does claim in reference to bishops, that we may see how far his pretensions interfere, if good, with the validity of the succession. "The Pope holds the place of God in the earth, so that he can confer ecclesiastical benefices without dimunition." In opposition to this

claim, Henry 8th proclaimed himself head of the realm and church of England. Again. "The translation, the deposition or resignation of a bishop is reserved to the Roman Pontiff alone, not so much by any canonical constitution as by the divine institution." It is hardly necessary to remind you that this claim was long and successfully resisted by the British church—and that it was ever opposed by the Greek and oriental churches—It has ever been the policy of the Pope to diminish the power of bishops, and nothing has he labored more to destroy than an independent Episcopacy. No barrier stands so much in his way now as the Episcopacy of the English church—and that of the independent Eastern dioceses; the independence of dioceses presents, in fact, the most effectual check to that consolidation of power which Rome has long endeavored to effect by concentrating all rule and authority in the hands of the Pope. Our own system of church government in the United States is a confederacy of independent dioceses—and like the state sovereignties, by having each its own governor and legislative assembly or council, effectually counteracts the tendency to consolidation. Once more, the canon law says: "As the translation, the deposition and resignation of bishops, so likewise the confirmation of those who are elected, after their election, is reserved to the Roman Pontiff alone, by reason of the spiritual bond." Not one word about *consecration*. These are the claims of the Pope—exorbitant enough as all will allow: but remember that these claims were not always admitted, and had they been so, we see not how the admitting of them can destroy or corrupt the succession. For although the bishops in nearly the whole of the western church did at one time yield to and acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff, still that did not deprive or divest them of the right and authority to ordain—a right which they always claimed in virtue of their office, and which they always continued to exercise. It was only so late as the council of Trent in the 16th century, that the question was agitated whether the bishops held their office "de jure divino:" or "de jure pontifico"—i. e. from Christ or the pope. The archbishop of Grenada strenously maintained in the council, that "wheresoever a bishop shall be, whether in Rome or in Augubium, all are of the same merit,

and of the same priesthood, and all successors of the Apostles. He inveighed against those who said St. Peter had ordained the other apostles, bishops. He admonished the council to study the scriptures and observe that power to teach throughout the world, to administer the sacraments and to govern the church, is equally given to all. And therefore as the Apostles had authority, not from Peter, but from Christ, so the successors of the Apostles have not power from Peter, but from Christ himself." The archbishop of Paris manfully upheld the same sentiments, nor did they meet with opposition in the council but from the Monks, Jesuits, Legates and Cardinals. It is through these, who are not of the regular order of the clergy, that the Pope has ever endeavored to enlarge and strengthen his power. The conclave which elects the Pope consists of seventy cardinals in all, of which six only are bishops, fifty of them are priests and the rest deacons: from which it is clear that he relies much more upon the presbytery, than any thing else, for the gift and maintenance of his authority.

By whom is the Pope himself elected?

But suppose for argument's sake that the succession does come through the Roman church—that the Pope did confirm the election of bishops, and order their consecration by other bishops, which is the utmost that can be said, does this invalidate or vitiate the succession? Why, we might just as well say that the pure faith or doctrine of the scriptures, which all the reformed churches now teach, is corrupted and vitiated, because it passed through the hands of the Romanists. They had in their keeping at one time the Bible, to the very same extent that they had in their keeping the power of ordination. If the word of salvation has been transmitted to us through their instrumentality, and we now have it in its simplicity and integrity, why may we not have the authority to administer that word, transmitted through the same channel, in its integrity also? Were the doctrine and sacraments of Christ's religion corrupted by the church of Rome?—so was the order of the gospel. Were these corruptions rejected and thrown off at the reformation, in respect to the faith of the gospel?—so were they also in respect to the order of the Gospel ministry. So that there exists not one reason for rejecting Episcopacy because of its having passed through the Roman church, that

does not apply with equal strength on the same grounds, for rejecting the Gospel itself.

The succession not polluted by the medium through which it is brought down to us.

The idea that the succession is vitiated by its having come through an impure channel, gains no countenance whatever from the sentiments and practice of men in other things. Thus the truth of God was not less his truth because it was proclaimed by Balaam and afterwards by Judas. The sacrament of baptism is not less a sacrament to him who receives it, because the minister who performs it, shall afterwards prove to be an unholy and wicked man. His wickedness furnishes a just reason for depriving him of office, but affects not the validity of the act which he executed, by virtue of the delegated authority with which he was invested. If it were otherwise—if our faith were directed to the minister and not to Christ, the institutor of the ordinance—and if we cannot be certain of receiving the sacraments until positively certified and assured of the piety of him who administers them, we never can be certain of receiving them at all.

Again, take the position that the channel of transmission corrupts that which descends through it, and what do you make of the holy Saviour of the world? Trace the line of succession through which the promised deliverer, the holy seed of salvation, came according to the flesh, and then ask yourselves, are you prepared to admit the principles contended for? There is in the line of the Saviour's ancestry, Rahab, the harlot—Thamar, who sought and obtained incestuous connexion with her own father-in-law.—There is Ruth, the Moabitess, the offspring of Lot and his own daughter—there is Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, who admitted the adulterous embraces of David. If then the promised seed of redemption was neither tainted nor destroyed by transmission through this line of ancestral succession—and it would be impious to say so—why should it be supposed that the *spiritual seed* for the ministration of salvation has suffered injury or been destroyed, because some of the agents for transmitting it have shown themselves as unworthy of the high honor vouchsafed to them, as those pointed out in the line of the Saviour's ancestry?

But let us carry the principle contended for, to its practical results, by applying it to those who most strongly urge its force.

The bishops of the British church were in communion with the Church of Rome, and Rome being a corrupt church, therefore ordination by the British bishops is worth nothing. We might ask here, what then was the worth of Mr. Wesley's ordination, since he received it from a British bishop? But we will let that pass for the present.

The Methodist plea for separation.

The great plea which the Methodists put in to justify their separation from the church, and their setting up a different communion, was that the Church of England was a corrupt church. In the letter of the Methodist bishops to their members prefixed to their book of discipline, they quote the words of the Messrs. Wesley, saying, "God then (1737) thrust them out to raise a holy people." In ch. i. s. 1. they speak of being convinced "*that there was a great deficiency of vital religion in the Church of England in America.*" The book of discipline proceeds to state that Mr. John Wesley did "*solemnly set apart by the imposition of his hands, and prayer, Thomas Coke, Doctor of civil law, late of Jesus College, in the University of Oxford, and a Presbyter of the Church of England, for the Episcopal office.*"* Now if the plea of corruption can be made good against the Church of England, and there was "a great deficiency of vital piety" in it, so that the Methodists felt constrained to withdraw and set up for themselves, I desire to ask whether Mr. Wesley's maintaining communion with this corrupt church, deficient as it was "in vital piety," and his continuing in that communion to the day of his death, and his declaring that he believed it the purest national church in the world—whether all this does not destroy the validity of his ordination of Thomas Coke, L. L. D., Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, &c. &c. &c. In a word, if communion with Rome destroy, because of Rome's corruptions, the ministerial authority—does not the communion of Mr. Wesley with the Church of England destroy, because of its corruptions, his authority to ordain also? If the principle contended for avail in one case, why not in both? If not in both, why in either?

We are not concerned to answer these questions, Brethren: Nor are we disposed to press the subject further at present upon the attention of those whose sensibility is the more easily

* See Appendix C.

excited, when investigation is directed to the weak points of their system. The man whose title deeds are defective, above all others, is sensitive to any intimation of a flaw of which he is painfully conscious himself. And so it is in religious systems: the upholders of them know their defects, and these they keep out of view and manifest any thing but a gracious temper towards those who would examine into them.

A summary of the argument: the points raised and determined.

In conclusion, we would just remind you, that we have showed from scripture that the office of the ministry is a delegated authority, and that the ministry of the Apostolic church consisted of three orders. We have endeavored to establish by argument, that a ministry thus constituted was left by the apostles in the church when they quitted the earth. We have arrayed before you the testimony of credible witnesses to prove that this ministry, so constituted, was continued in the church till such time as is acknowledged on all hands, that it prevailed universally and without a single exception in any country. We have argued, and as we think conclusively, that it was morally impossible for the chain of Episcopal succession to be broken, and that any such alleged interruption is destitute of proof. We have considered the objection grounded on the papal corruptions to vitiate or invalidate the succession, and shown that it is without force. It may be asked then whether, if the position we take upon this subject be made good, we do not *unchurch* all other denominations of Christians and leave them to the uncovenanted mercies of God? I reply, in the first place, *we* do not *unchurch* them. It is an inference which those make who, by a voluntary act of their own, have separated themselves from that order of the gospel which we have endeavored to prove was established in the primitive church. It is therefore unjust and ungenerous to charge us with consequences which do not flow from any act of ours, but which are the legitimate results of their own deliberate proceedings. We have endeavored in every possible way consistent with christian charity, to prevent these divisions—and come what may—charge upon us whatever men may please—we can never, for a moment, by word or act, give any countenance or sanction, to the infidel maxim that division into sects is advantageous to the cause of truth

Do Episcopalians unchurch all others?

and piety, while the affecting prayer of Christ for the unity of his church, shall be received and acknowledged as part and parcel of divine revelation. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."* No, we shall do all we can by declaring the truth in the love of it, and by fair argument—by instructing those who oppose themselves to us, in the spirit of meekness—and by endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, to bring all believers to "that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be left no place among them, either for error in religion, or for viciousness in life."†

If we must express an opinion of others, it is this.

How far the various bodies of professed christians around us, united under rules and regulations for their government, which they have drawn from the word of God, and sanctioned by what they honestly believe to be a just and fair interpretation of its meaning—how far they are to be regarded as churches of Christ, I shall not undertake to say. I honestly think it is a matter admitting of serious question. While I freely concede that some of them preach the faith of the gospel, and that this faith, wherever received, will manifest, and does in them manifest, its appropriate fruits in righteousness—in charity—and in hope—still candor obliges me to declare, that in the exercise of the best reason and judgment which God has given me, and enlightened by all the information which the most diligent search has afforded to my mind, I think them destitute of an *essential feature* or mark of the visible Catholic church of Christ: that is, *a ministry, deriving authority to act in the appointments of religion, from the Apostles.* At the same time, I grant that their ecclesiastical organizations have all the force and obligation, on those who have submitted to their authority, which the most solemn vows and engagements can bring upon the soul. Their ordinances, administered by the ministry which they have—such for example, as baptism and the Lord's supper—are to those who receive them, with the understanding they have of their nature and obligation, prop-

* St. John xvii. 20, 21. † Ordinal.

erly sacraments—just as much so as an oath taken before a private citizen, instead of a magistrate or judge, is binding on the conscience of him who takes it.—See Appendix D.

And now is there just reason to charge upon such sentiments the odium of illiberality and uncharitableness? It is often said that the differences among christians are unimportant—not of that grave and serious character to cause emulations, strifes and divisions. If so, why do not those who have gone out from us, return? and why should every attempt like the present, to state the true grounds of difference be frowned upon as ungracious and be met by the weapons which calumny employs against stubborn facts, honest statements and candid and fair arguments? We have no wish whatever to multiply causes of difference between ourselves and other denominations of christians. On the contrary, the terms of communion which the Episcopal church requires are so free and liberal, as more frequently to give others occasion to charge her with laxity, than afford fair opportunity to them, as she justly does, to commend her catholic spirit—she offers no disputed points in theology as tests to her members of the soundness of their christian character, but stating the facts and doctrines of the Apostles' creed as the articles of her faith, and inculcating charity, she prays for "all who profess and call themselves christians, that they may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life." She goes further, and in accordance with the Apostle's directions that prayers and supplications be offered up for all men—the language of her liturgy is that it "may please God to have mercy upon all men." She stops not here, but in obedience to the blessed Saviour's injunctions and in the spirit of his meek and lowly example, instructs us to pray "that it may please thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and to turn their hearts."

Such is the spirit I pray may rule ever more in my heart—and while I shall "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and "speak the truth boldly as I ought to speak," God being my helper, I shall endeavor to utter not a word or sentiment inconsistent with the spirit of sincerity and truth in which that prayer should be offered.

APPENDIX.

A. p. 60. "I allow that *each state ought to have one bishop of its own by divine right;* which I show from Paul, saying —'for this cause left I thee in Crete.'" M. Luther.

"*The bishops might easily retain the obedience due unto them*, if they urged us not to keep those traditions which we cannot keep with a good conscience." Melancthon.

"We have often protested that we do greatly approve the ecclesiastical polity and degrees in the church, and as much as lieth in us, do desire to conserve them." Melancthon.

"*I would to God it lay in me to restore the government of bishops.* For I see what manner of church we shall have, the ecclesiastical polity being dissolved. I do see that hereafter will grow up in the church a greater tyranny than there ever was before." Melancthon.

"By what right or law may we *dissolve the ecclesiastical polity*, if the bishops will grant to us, that which in reason they ought to grant? And if it were lawful for us to do so, yet surely it were not expedient. *Luther was ever of this opinion.*" Melancthon.

"Zuingle has sent hither in print, his confession of faith. *You would* say neither more nor less, than *that he is not in his senses.* At one stroke, he would abolish all ceremonies, and *he would have no bishops.*" Melancthon.

"If they will give us such an hierarchy, in which the bishops have such a pre-eminence as that they do not refuse to be subject unto Christ, I will confess that *they are worthy of all anathemas*, if any such there be, *who will not* reverence it, and *submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience.*" Calvin.

Of Calvin's Episcopal opinions, Mons. Daille, a French protestant divine thus writes—"Calvin honored all bishops that were not subjects of the Pope, such as were the prelates of England. We confess that the foundation of their charge is

good and lawful, *established by the Apostles according to the command of Christ.*" Bingham's French Church's Apology for the Church of England.

Mons. De L'Angle, another divine of the same church, thus writes to the bishop of London: "Calvin, in his treatise of the necessity of the Reformation, makes no difficulty to say, that if there should be any so unreasonable as to refuse the communion of a church that was pure in its worship and doctrine, and not to submit himself with respect to its government, under pretence, that it had retained an *Episcopacy qualified* as yours is, there would be no censure or rigor of discipline that ought not to be exercised upon them." Stillingfleet's unreasonableness of separation, at the end.

"*It was essential that by the perpetual ordination of God*, it was, it is, and it will be necessary, that some one in the presbytery, chief both in place and dignity, should preside to govern the proceedings, *by that right which is given him of God.*" Bèza.

"In my writings touching church government, I ever impugned the Romish hierarchy, but never intended to touch or impugn the ecclesiastical polity of the church of England." Beza.

If there are any, as you will not easily persuade me, who would reject the whole order of bishops, *God forbid that any man in his senses should assent to their madness*—"Let her (Church of England) enjoy that singular blessing (Episcopacy) of God, which I pray may be perpetual." Beza.

"By the perpetual observation of all churches, *even from the Apostles' times*, we see, *that it seemed good to the Holy Ghost*, that among presbyters, to whom the procuration of churches was chiefly committed, there should be one that should have the care or charge of divers churches, and the whole ministry committed to him; and by reason of that charge he was above the rest; and therefore the name of bishop was attributed peculiarly to those chief rulers." Bucer de cura, &c.

Of the Episcopate, therefore, that is, the superiority of one Pastor above the rest, we first determine that it is repugnant to no divine law. If any one think otherwise, that is, if any one condemn the whole ancient church of folly or even of impiety,

the burden of proof beyond doubt lies upon him; &c. The very ministry instituted by the Apostles sufficiently proves that equality of the Ecclesiastical offices was not commanded by Christ. We, therefore, first lay down this, which is undoubtedly true, that it, (viz: the Episcopate or superiority of one Pastor above the rest,) neither can or ought to be found fault with; in which we have agreeing with us, Zanchius, Chemnitius, Hemmingius, Calvin, Melancthon, Bucer, and even Beza, as thus far he says, *that one certain person chosen by the judgment of the rest of his co-presbyters was chief over the presbytery and was permanently so.*

Another is, that that Episcopate, which we treat of, was received by the universal church. This appears from all the councils, whose authority now likewise is very great among the pious. It appears also from an examination of the councils either national or provincial, of which there is almost none which does not show manifest signs of Episcopal superiority. All the fathers, without exception, testify the same, of whom he who shows least defference to the Episcopate is Jerome, himself not a bishop, but a presbyter. Therefore the testimony of him alone is sufficient: "*It was decreed through the whole world that one chosen from the presbyters should be set over the rest, to whom all care of the church should belong.*" Indeed this error of Aerius was condemned by the whole church, that he said *that a Presbyter ought to be distinguished from a bishop by no difference.* Jerome himself, in reply to him, who had written *that there is no difference between a bishop and a presbyter*, answered, *this is unskilfully enough to make shipwreck in port, as it is said.* Even Zanchius acknowledges the agreement of the whole church in this matter.

The third thing is this, that the Episcopate had its commencement in the time of the Apostles. The catalogues of the bishops in Irenæus, Eusebius, Socrates, Theodoret, and others, all of which begin in the Apostolic age, testify this. But to refuse credit in a historical matter to so great authors, and so unanimous among themselves, is not the part of any but an irreverent and stubborn disposition. For that is just as if you should deny that it was true, what all histories of the Romans declare, that the consulate began from the expelled Tarquins. But let us hear Jerome again: "*At Alexandria,*" he says, "*from*

Mark the Evangelist the presbyters always named one chosen from themselves, placed in a higher degree, bishop."

Mark died in the 8th year of Nero: to whom succeeded Anianus, to Anianus Abilius, to Abilius Cerdo, the Apostle John being yet alive. After the death of James, Simeon had the Episcopate of Jerusalem: after the death of Peter and Paul, Linus, Anacletus, and Clemens had the Roman; and Euodius and Ignatius, that of Antioch, the same Apostle still living. This ancient history is surely not to be despised, to which Ignatius himself, the contemporary of the Apostles, and Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who followed him next, afford the most open testimony which there is no need to transcribe. '*Now indeed,*' says Cyprian, '*bishops are appointed in all the provinces and in every city.*'

Let the fourth be, that this bishop was approved of by the Divine law, or (as Bucer says) it seemed good to the Holy Spirit that one among the presbyters should have special charge. The divine revelation affords to this assertion an argument not to be withstood; for Christ himself commands it to be written *to the seven angels of the* Asiatic *churches.* Those who understand the churches themselves by the *angels* manifestly contradict the sacred writings. *For the candlesticks are the churches*, says Christ: *but the stars are the angels of the seven churches.* It is wonderful whither the humor of contradicting may not carry men, when they dare to confound those things which the Holy Spirit so evidently distinguished. We do not deny that the name of angel may be suited to every Pastor in a certain general signification: but here it is manifestly written to one in every church. Was there therefore only one Pastor in every city? No, indeed. For even in Paul's time many presbyters were appointed at Ephesus to feed the church of God. (Acts xx. 17, 18.) Why, therefore, are letters sent to one person in every church, if no one had a certain peculiar and eminent function?" After showing that some of the ancient Fathers, and among the Reformers, Bullinger, Beza, Rainoldus, agree with him in the representation: he says, "Christ, therefore, writing to those bishops, thus eminent among the clergy, undoubtedly approved of this Episcopal superiority." Grotius.

To the statements and argument of this learned presbyterian,

we need not add any thing: They must be hard indeed to convince who are proof against the facts and reasoning of Grotius.

The foregoing extracts are quoted from a small but exceedingly valuable compilation by the bishop of New-Jersey, entitled "a word for the church," to which the reader is "benevolently" recommended. To obtain it, will cost very little, and its perusal may confer lasting and inappreciable benefit.

B. p. 63. "Despairing of justifying their ordinations from the scriptures, the resort of dissenters is to a denial of the episcopal succession. But by this very denial they show how important it is. Now that there has been a body of men in the world called bishops ever since the days of the Apostles, is as undeniable as that there has been a body of christians. One may as well deny the continuance of the human race, or the succession of the generations of men as the continuance and succession of bishops. The succession of bishops as a body of men, then, has never been broken. But it is alledged that the succession has been vitiated by irregular admissions, thus violating the law upon which it depends. But what if the allegation were true? Suppose there have been men professing and acknowledged to be members of the christian church, who have never been baptized, is not he who is truly baptized, *now* a member of the church? Suppose that men have occasionally assumed the office of a presbyter, and been allowed to exercise the duties and functions of that office without any ordination at all, is he who is regularly ordained in this age any the less a presbyter on that account? Does the invalidity of his orders or the fact of his having had no orders, annihilate the order in the ministry to which he pretended to belong? Most certainly not. Neither could the fact (if there were such an one) that some men have been received as bishops without a regular ordination to the Episcopate, destroy the order of bishops, or make him who is regularly ordained in this age any the less a bishop, than if no such irregularity had ever occurred. But suppose they could prove that the order was lost, what would they gain? Simply a freedom from the restraint of God's laws, a liberty to follow the decrees and desires of their own hearts.

But let us haste to notice the alledged breaks in the succession.

1. "It is not enough to state the fact in a general manner; you must trace the succession in every individual case. You are a priest: I go to you for baptism, for instance. I must closely examine your authority: by whom were you ordained? By the Bishop of Vermont. By whom was the Bishop of Vermont ordained? (consecrated.) And by whom was *that* individual ordained? and so on. Are you prepared to answer these questions? Have you the documents to prove your legitimate pastoral descent from Jesus Christ? Can you establish your ecclesiastical pedigree beyond all controversy? I ask nothing unnecessary.

1. To this, I reply that it is *not* necessary to trace the succession in every individual case, because every bishop had three to ordain him, and they had nine, and so on. Thus the individual succession becomes, in two or three generations, merged in the general succession, and if there were but *one* sound and valid Bishop in a nation or a church a few generations back, all their bishops would be sound and valid now. For instance: it appears from an actual comparison of the table of the American succession, that if only one of the bishops in this country forty years ago had been valid, all would be so now; for they can all trace their succession to him.

2. I can give the succession in the individual case, taking only one in the line, whereas there are in fact never less than three. HOPKINS, GRISWOLD, WHITE—MOORE of Canterbury in England; thence by the line of Canterbury, eighty-seven names, to AUGUSTINE, A. D. 596. From *Augustine*, through Lyons, to POLYCARP of Smyrna, thirty-one names, and *Polycarp* was ordained by ST. JOHN, and *St. John* by JESUS CHRIST. Again, by the *same line*, I go back to *Theodore*, ninth archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 688, eighty-nine names from Bishop Hopkins: and thence, by the *Bishops of Rome*, seventy-six names, to ST. PETER, who was ordained by CHRIST. Again, by the same line, I go back to CHICELY, A. D. 1414, twenty-nine names; and thence by *St. Davids* to DAVID, A. D. 519, sixty-six names, thence by *Jerusalem* to ST. JAMES and *the rest* of THE APOSTLES, fifty-one names.

Thus Bishop Hopkins, from whom I had my orders is the

121st from St. John, giving about 14 years for each bishop: 165th from St. Peter, about 10 years for each bishop: 146th from St. James, and the rest of the apostles at Jerusalem about 12 years for each bishop.

I have omitted the names in each line of succession for brevity's sake; but if my friends' incredulity will not be overcome without, I will furnish every one."

REV. W. D. WILSON.

Banner of the Cross, June, 10, 1843.

"But the question is often asked can the succession be traced up step by step to the Apostles? Is there no breach in it which would invalidate the whole? The Master's *promise* 'lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,' is enough to assure the humble believer, that no such breach has occurred, or can occur to the end of the world. Besides, the utmost pains have always been taken in every branch of the church to keep the succession regular and pure. *Diocesan* succession and *Apostolical* succession are two distinct things. As in Maryland, for example, we have had four Bishops, but no one of them has been concerned in the consecration of his successor. So that a vacancy or interregnum in a particular Diocese—or in fifty or an hundred dioceses, even of long continuance, does not affect the succession in the least. One of the Apostolical canons enjoins, that two or three Bishops, at least, shall unite in every consecration. The succession therefore does not depend upon a line of single Bishops in one Diocese running back to the Apostles—because every Bishop has had at least three to ordain him either one of whom had power to perpetuate the succession. How rapidly do the securities multiply as we go back! Bishop Whittingham had three to ordain him; his ordainers had nine; at the third step there were twenty-seven: at the fourth eighty-one: at the fifth two hundred and forty-three: and so on increasing in a three fold proportion. Now if any one of the entire number to whom Bishop W's. consecration may be traced back had a valid ordination, the succession is in him, and he can transmit it to any other in whose consecration he may assist.

The securities therefore are incalculably strong, and the claim of any duly consecrated bishop to the Apostolic succession, is more certain than that of any monarch upon earth

to his hereditary crown. Lists of the Apostolical succession, in descent from the different Apostles, have been carefully preserved by Eusebius and other early writers—and they have been continued in different lines down to the present day. Any reader who desires to consult them, is referred to *Percival* on Apostolical succession, and *Chapin's* primitive church. Rome may trace its line to St. Peter—the Greeks to St. Paul—the Syrians and Nestorians to St. Thomas and the American Episcopal church to St. John.

Bishop White, the head of the American line of bishops was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury We will therefore present a list beginning with St. John, and coming through the Episcopate of Lyons, in France or Gaul, and that of Canterbury in England, till it connects with ours in the United States of America.

St. John.

1. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna.

Bishops of Lyons.

1. Pothinus.
2. Irenæus.
3. Zacharias.
4. Elias.
5. Faustinus.
6. Verus.
7. Julius.
8. Ptolemy.
9. Vocius.
10. Maximus.
11. Tetradus.
12. Verissimus.
13. Justus.
14. Albinus.
15. Martin.
16. Antiochus.
17. Elpidius.
18. Sicarius.
19. Eucherius, 1.
20. Patiens.
21. Lupicuus.
22. Rusticus.
23. Stephanus.
24. Viventiolus.
25. Eucherius, 2
26. Lupus.
27. Licontius.
28. Sacerdos.
29. Nicetus.
30. Priscus.
31. Ætherius, A. D. 589.

CANTERBURY.

32. 33. from St. John. A. D. 596, Augustine, missionary to the Anglo Saxons, was consecrated by Virgilius, 24th Bishop of Arles, assisted by Ætherius, 31st Bishop of Lyons.
34. Lawrence, A. D. 605.
35. Mellitus, " 619.
36. Justus, " 624.
37. Honorius, " 634.
38. Adeodatus, " 654.
39. Theodore, " 688.
40. Brithwald, " 693.
41. Tatwine, " 731.
42. Nothelm, " 735.
43. Cuthbert, " 742.
44. Bregwin, " 759.
45. Lambert, " 763.
46. Æthelred, 1. " 793.
47. Wulfred, " 803.
48. Theogild or Feogild, " 830. Consecrated June 5th, and died Sept. 3rd.
49. Ceolnoth, Sept, 11. " 830.
50. Æthelred, 2. " 871.
51. Phlegmund, " 891.
52. Anthelm or Adelm, " 923.
53. Wulfelm, " 928.
54. Odo Severus, " 941.
55. Dunstan, " 959.
56. Æthelgar, " 988.

57. Siricus, " 989.
58. Aluricus or Alfricus, " 996.
59. Elphege, " 1005.
60. Living or Leoning or Elkskan, " 1013.
61. Agelnoth or Æthelst, " 1020.
62. Edsin or Elsin, " 1038.
63. Robert Gemeticensis, " 1050.
64. Stigand, " 1052.
65. Lanfranc, " 1077.
66. Anselm, " 1093.
67. Rodulph, " 1114.
68. Wm. Corboil, " 1122.
69. Theobold, " 1138.
70. Thomas a Becket, " 1162.
71. Richard, " 1174.
72. Baldwin Fordensis, " 1184.
73. Reginald Fitz Joceline, 1191.
74. Hubert Walten, " 1193.
75. Stephen Langton, " 1207.
76. Richard Wethersfield, 1229,
77. Edmund, " 1234.
78. Boniface, " 1245,
79. Rob. Kilwarby, " 1272.
80. John Peckham, " 1278.
81. Rob. Winchesly, " 1294.
82. Walter Regnold, " 1313.
83. Simon Mepham. " 1328.
84. John Startford, " 1333.
85. Thos. Bradwardine, " 1348.
86. Simon Islip, " 1349.
87. Simon Langham, " 1366.
88. Wm. Whittlesey, " 1368.
89. Simon Sudbury, " 1374.
90. Wm. Courtney, " 1381.
91. Thos. Arundle, " 1396.
92. Henry Chichely, " 1414.
93. John Stafford, " 1443.
94. John Kemp, " 1452.
95. Thos. Bourcher, " 1454.
96. John Morton, " 1486.
97. Henry Dean, " 1501.
98. Wm. Wareham, " 1503.
99. Thos. Cranmer, " 1533.
100. Reginald Pole, " 1555.
101. Matthew Parker, " 1559.
102. Ed. Grindall, Dec. " 1573.
103. John Whitgift, " 1583.
104. Richard Bancroft, " 1604.
105. George Abbott, " 1611.
106. Wm. Laud, " 1633.
107. Wm. Juxon, " 1660.
108. Gilbert Sheldon, " 1663.
109. Wm. Sancroft, " 1677.
110. John Tillotson, " 1691.
111. Thos. Tennison, " 1694
112. Wm. Wake, " 1715.
113. John Potter, " 1737.
114. Thos, Secker, " 1738.
115. Thos. Herring, " 1747.
116. Matthew Hutton, " 1757.
117. Frederick Cornwallis, 1768.
118. John Moore, " 1783.
119. from St. John is William White of Pennsylvania, consecrated February the 4th, 1787, by John Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Bishop of Peterborough.

The compilers of the lists from which the above was taken have consulted the best authorities, and no more doubt of its authenticity can be entertained, than of any chronological table of historical events, or list of the sovereigns of any country, drawn from its official registers and archives. The dates attached to the names of the Archbishops of Canterbury, indicate, in several instances, not the time of their consecration but of their translation to that see." Rev. Dr. Henshaw.

C. p. 69. The following extracts will not be without interest to those concerned to investigate the claims of Methodist Episcopacy.

"To all [to] whom these presents shall come, John Wesley,

late fellow of Lincoln College in Oxford, *Presbyter of the Church of England*, sendeth greeting: Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces in North America, who desire to continue under my care, *and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England*, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper *according to the usage of the same church;* and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers—

Know all men, that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart *as a superintendent*, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, being assisted by other ordained ministers, Thomas Coke, doctor of civil law, a *presbyter of the Church of England*, and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, this second day of September 1784. JOHN WESLEY.

Mr. Wesley being only a Presbyter, and Thomas Coke being also a Presbyter of the Church of England, we may surely with reason ask, what additional power or authority could Wesley's imposition of hands confer on Coke? Might not Coke, being a Presbyter, just with the same propriety have laid hands on Wesley? If presbyter and bishop, be the same order, as is contended, then what use or reason was there for ordaining Coke? If presbyter and bishop be not the same, then Wesley being no bishop could not confer the episcopal office on Coke.

Under the commission of Wesley as above, Dr. Coke came to America and met the Methodist conference at Baltimore. In the space of forty-eight hours he ordained Mr. Asbury deacon, presbyter and bishop, and afterwards united with him in an address to General Washington—Coke and Asbury signing the address as bishops.

In what light Mr. Wesley regarded this assumption of the

title of bishop by his superintendents may be seen from the following extract of a letter addressed by him to Mr. Asbury, under date of September 20th, 1788.

"One instance of this, your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called bishop? I shudder and start at the very thought. For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this."

Let us now see what estimate Dr. Coke himself put upon his ordination as a Bishop. In a letter addressed to Bishop White of Pennsylvania, dated April 24, 1791, nearly two months after the death of Mr. Wesley, an event of which he had not then heard, he proposes a reunion of the Methodists with the church, and says "I do not think that the generality of them, (the Methodist Ministers) perhaps none of them would refuse to submit to a *re-ordination*, if other hindrances were removed out of the way." If Dr. Coke thought that he was really invested with power to ordain ministers in the church of God and had so ordained them, how could he for a moment tolerate the idea of a *re-ordination?* In a letter addressed to Bishop Seabury of Connecticut, dated May 14, 1791—only three weeks after that to Bishop White, he is more full and explicit. He says, "for five or six years after my union with Mr. Wesley, I remained fixed in my attachments to the Church of England: but afterwards for many reasons which it would be tedious and useless to mention, I changed my sentiments, and promoted a separation from it as far as my influence reached. Within these two years I am come back again: my love for the Church of England has returned. I think I am attached to it on a ground much more rational, and consequently much less likely to be shaken than formerly. I have many a time run into error; but to be ashamed of confessing my error when convinced of it, has never been one of my defects. Therefore when I was fully convinced of my error in the steps I took to bring about a separation from the Church of England, in Europe, I delivered before a congregation of about three thousand people, in our largest chapel in Dublin, on a Sunday evening, after preaching, an exhortation, which, in fact, amounted to a *recantation of my error.* Sometime afterward, I repeated the same in our largest chapels in London, and in

several other parts of England and Ireland: and I have reason to believe that my proceedings in this respect have given a death blow to all the hopes of a separation which may exist in the minds of any in those kingdoms.

On the same principles I most cordially wish for a reunion of Protestant Episcopal and the Methodist Churches in these States. * * * How great, then, would be the strength of *our* church (will you give me leave to call it so? I mean the Protestant Episcopal) if the two sticks were made one? * * * * Now, on a reunion taking place, our ministers both elders and deacons, would expect to have, and ought to have, the same authority they have at present, of administering the ordinances according to the respective powers already invested in them for this purpose. *I well know that they must submit to a re-ordination* which I believe might be easily brought about if every other hindrance was removed out of the way. But the grand objection would arise from the want of confidence which the deacons and unordained preachers would experience."

The Dr's. plan for removing this objection is seen in the following: "*But if the two houses of the Convention* (he refers to the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church) *of the clergy would consent to your consecration of Mr. Asbury and me as bishops of the Methodist Society in the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States*, (or by any other title, if that be not proper,) on the supposition of the reunion of the two churches under proper mutual stipulations; and engage that the Methodist Society shall have a regular supply, on the death of their Bishops, and so, *ad perpetuum*, the grand difficulty in respect to the preachers would be removed—they would have the same men to confide in whom they have at present, and all other mutual stipulations would soon be settled." *So. Churchman, June* 9, 1843.

We offer but one more extract. In a letter addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, he says, * * "if his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent and the government should think proper *to appoint me their Bishop in India, I should most cheerfully and most gratefully accept of the offer.* * * * * * In my letter to Lord Liverpool I observed that *I should, in case of my*

appointment to the Episcopacy of India, return most fully and faithfully into the bosom of the Established Church, and do every thing in my power to promote its interests, and would submit to all such restrictions in the fulfilment of my office, as the Government and the Bench of Bishops at home should think necessary."—Ed. Rev., No. cxlv. 1840.

The preceding requires no comment. Conclusions against Dr. Coke's Episcopal authority or character are inevitable and irresistible.

D. p. 72. The subjoined extracts from a sermon preached by Mr. Wesley, May 4th, 1789, less than two years before his death, will show in what light he regarded the claim of his preachers to administer sacraments. The text is Heb. v. 4.

"In 1744, all the Methodist preachers had their first conference. But none of them dreamed that the being called to preach, gave them any right to administer sacraments. And when that question was proposed, in what light are we to consider ourselves? it was answered, *as extraordinary messengers*, raised up to provoke the *ordinary* ones to jealousy. In order hereto, one of our first rules was given to each preacher, you are to do *that part* of the work which we appoint. But *what work* was this? Did we ever appoint you to administer sacraments? to exercise the priestly office? Such a design never entered into our mind; it was the farthest from our thoughts: and if any preacher had taken such a step, we should have looked upon it as a palpable breach of this rule and consequently a recantation of our connexion.

For supposing (what I utterly deny,) that the receiving you as a preacher at the same time gave an authority to administer the sacraments, yet it gave you no other authority than to do it, or any thing else, *where I appoint*. But when did I appoint you to do this? No where at all. Therefore by this very rule you are excluded from doing it, and in doing it, you renounce the very first principle of Methodism, which was wholly and solely to preach the gospel. I wish all of you who are vulgarly termed Methodists would seriously consider what has been said. And particularly you whom God hath commissioned to call sinners to repentance. It does by no means follow from hence, that ye are commissioned to baptize or administer the

Lord's supper. Ye never dreamed of this, for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, "seek the priesthood also." Ye knew "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron!" O contain yourselves within your own bounds, be content with preaching the Gospel; "do the work of Evangelists," proclaim to all the world the loving kindness of God our Saviour; declare to all, "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand: repent ye and believe the Gospel!" I earnestly advise you, abide in your place; keep your own station. Ye were, fifty years ago, those of you that were then Methodist preachers, *extraordinary messengers* of God, not going in your own will, but *thrust out*, not to supersede, but to provoke to jealousy the ordinary messengers. In God's name, stop there!"

Alas! this voice of warning and remonstrance was uttered in vain. The Methodists have long since, in this country at least, completed their schism, and though professing to derive ministerial authority from Wesley, and to be but slightly removed from the doctrine and government of the church, yet few others are found to manifest a more determined spirit of hostility to the prevalence of her worship, the spread of her principles, and the increase of her members.